AN INTERPRETATION OF

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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THE ENGLISH BIBLE

By B. H. CARROLL, D.D.

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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

BY

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INTRODUCTION

IT is not my purpose to present a critical introduction to the present volume. Happily that has been supplied by the learned author himself. Not in all the range of Biblical interpretation will there be found a more comprehensive or a more luminous discussion of the Apocalypse than is contained in the following pages.

The book will speak for itself, but it may not be amiss to say that it is strongly post-millennial. From before the close of the apostolic era, there have been those who looked for the immediate return of our Redeemer. To many of the early disciples, His second coming even then seemed imminent. The line of cleavage between the pre-millennialists and the post-millennialists began very near the Cross, and while the discussion has been maintained for almost two thousand years, the mystery is still unsolved and its solution must await the unfolding of the future years.

Let it be said, however, that Dr. Carroll has made herein a contribution to post-millennial interpretation that will challenge the study and the admiration of Christians everywhere, irrespective of their preconceived opinions. The subject is handled with the skill of a master and this work will find rapt and eager students wherever the Word of God is treasured and revered. The author approaches the discussion with dignity and conscious power, and I believe that nothing in the range of Biblical interpretation covering the book of Revelation

will quite take rank with the remarkable chapters that illuminate this work.

It is commended most sincerely to all who love our Lord. It contains no low note of doubt, discouragement or despair. It rings true to God's inspired Word and contains no hypercritical interrogation points. It is not coloured by the higher criticism. Like some spiritual Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World, it bears the torch of Christian truth and knowledge.

Reverently it is sent forth upon its mission of inspiration and love. The dearest wish of its author and the most cherished prayer and hope of its editor is that it will cheer God's saints and glorify the name of Christ until He comes.

J. B. CRANFILL.

DALLAS, TEXAS.

I

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

TWO thoughts strive for mastery in considering Revelation.

The first arises from the character of the book, its position in the sacred library, and its relative importance. In rank it equals any other New Testament book, being marvellously great in its doctrines and promises. It is the inspiring book of the Bible. From its composition to this day it has been a quickening book in the experience of the people of God—a book of resurrection power in all seasons of despair. Wherever the light of its doctrines and promises shines, darkness is dispelled, faith becomes heroic, hope revives, and the powers of the world to come rest on those who walk in its light. Whoever, in humble and docile spirit, enters into a prayerful study of its great themes and lays to heart its great promises will set his soul on fire with zeal and become transformed in his experience.

Not merely in date of composition, but in fitness of content it closes the canon of the Scriptures. It finishes. It completes. It perfects. It not only dispenses with all need of further revelation, but is not susceptible of subtraction. Ignorance, impiety or blasphemy alone would undertake to add to or take from its finality of content. It is the climax of history embodied in prophecy. We may indeed expect new light to con-

tinuously break out of God's Word, but we may not expect a new word.

The second thought imposing solemnity on your teacher is that it is quite possible he will never again have the opportunity and honour to teach this book to a class of preachers. Only once in four years do we come to it—and when this exposition ends he will be sixty-nine years old. Oliver Wendell Holmes insists that nature administers the black drop at threescore and ten, and while here and there exceptions arise in human history of mental vigour and physical vitality extending to fourscore years, yet since the rule and not the exception determines probabilities, it is my purpose to teach the book now as if for the last time.

According to invariable custom in this course, we commence a book with a brief historical introduction, not assuming to forestall the more critical and elaborate discussion rightfully belonging to the department of Biblical Introduction, but because you need some reliable knowledge on this subject in order to an understanding of the book itself. If an historical introduction be helpful in the case of other books, it is indispensable in this book, since here historical introduction determines the theory of interpretation.

That you may not be altogether dependent on my conclusions, I commend as helpful, and not greatly misleading, two books on historical introduction so far as Revelation is concerned. I might give you a hundred, but these two are among the best. First, the historical introduction in the brief commentary of Jamison, Faucett and Brown; second, the historical introduction in the American Baptist Commentary volume on Revelation by Dr. Justin A. Smith. You may not understand me, of course, to endorse all the positions in these introductions

taken by either one, but I mean to say that in the main they are very helpful and the least misleading. Where I may differ from them will be sufficiently evident.

I now also commend, out of a great multitude of commentaries, just two on Revelation for collateral class reading. You will find more rubbish and confusion in commentaries on this book than on any other book of the New Testament, but the two commended are easily accessible, and as you may want to make this the study of your life on this book, read these commentaries as we progress: First, the same Dr. Justin A. Smith in the American Baptist Commentary; second, a little book that will cost you fifty cents: "The World Lighted," by Dr. Edward Smith.

There are two classes of commentaries that I emphatically do not recommend. First, the class so carried away by pre-millennial conception that all interpretations must be stretched out or cut off to fit their procrustean bed. Second, the class so obsessed with the spirit of the radical criticism that they follow their presuppositions in minimizing the supernatural, and particularly strain to eliminate the prophetic element from this book.

THE TEXT

While criticism on the Greek text belongs in general to New Testament Greek rather than to New Testament English, one characteristic of the Greek in Revelation needs explanation here, to wit: Its unlikeness and inferiority *as pure Greek* to the Greek of John's gospel and of his letters. The relevancy of some notice of this matter here arises from the fact that this characteristic of the Greek is pleaded either to disprove the authorship

of John the Apostle, or else in support of an early date of the book, which would very largely affect its interpretation. The difference between the Greek of Revelation and the Greek of John's gospel arises from a difference in the nature of the two books; John's gospel is history; this book is not only an apocalypse, but one run in the mould of ancient Hebrew symbolic imagery —one following the apocalyptic analogues of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah. Not only so, but its symbols are not limited to the apocalypses of ancient prophecy; they are drawn from all the Old Testament books. It derives its plumage from the Paradise and the serpent of Genesis, the plagues of Exodus, the Wilderness of Numbers, the Lion of Judah, the Holy City of Jerusalem, the Temple of Solomon, the Jezebel of Israel, Babylon and the Euphrates, just as well as from the apocalyptic Seraphim of Isaiah, the Cherubim of Ezekiel, the locusts of Joel, the horses and witnesses of Zechariah, and the beasts of Daniel. More than all the New Testament books, Revelation is enswathed in Old Testament imagery. While it never quotes directly from the Old Testament, yet it is throughout reminiscent of it. A careful computer of its allusions and references to the Old Testament reckons them at four hundred. So remarkable is this feature of the book that Dr. Broadus, as I have been informed, was accustomed to devote an entire lecture to this feature alone whenever he taught Revelation.

Of course this necessitated Hebraistic idioms rather than pure Greek. But with all this external unlikeness in Greek, there must be taken into account one instance of likeness in the Greek of all John's writings—great Greek scholars have called their students' attention to it, and that is that a student of New Testament Greek finds

John's Greek, whether in his gospel, his letters or Revelation, the easiest Greek to learn.

Another general fact should be noted in connection with the inferiority of the Greek: It is the tendency of old age to revert to the idioms and dialect of native speech rather than to become more perfect in the acquired speech of a foreign tongue. So that the inferiority of the Greek proves nothing against John's authorship nor in favour of an early date.

We now come to the authorship of this book. "Who wrote it?" On these grounds John's authorship has been questioned: first, the character of the Greek, just explained. The second objection arises from doctrinal bias. Early in the Christian centuries certain men misinterpreted the teaching in this book on the Millennium and went into such extravagances that after a while others began to inquire: Is Revelation an apostolic book? There is where it commenced. Just as false interpretations of certain paragraphs in the sixth and tenth chapters of Hebrews led men to question its Pauline authorship, so these interpretations on the pre-millennium line made the book of Revelation odious. A better thing is to show the misconception of the interpretation and hold on to the apostolic authorship.

Evidence on authorship is always of two kinds. First, external, or historical. That is to say, the testimony of witnesses living near to the times of the writer who otherwise had opportunity to know who was the author. It is the traditional or historical evidence of authorship that is regarded as the best evidence. This historical evidence is overwhelming in favour of John's authorship. Men who had heard John preach have left on record their testimony. You will find the details of the

testimony in the two commentaries to which I called your attention a while ago.

The second kind of evidence is internal—that is, what facts does the book itself furnish as to its author? The internal evidence of John's authorship is absolutely overwhelming. I might classify the main part of this evidence into two kinds: First, what the author says of himself. You will find mainly what he says of himself in the first chapter and the last. In the 1st verse he calls himself John, and in the 2d verse he identifies the John thus: "Who bare witness of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." Now, that "*bare witness*" is in the Greek "aorist" and signifies completed past action. That is, the servant John to whom this apocalypse was given is the John who had borne witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I know that some are disposed to evade the natural grammatical force of this "aorist", by calling it the *epistolary* aorist. There is no reason to resort to this expedient. In his gospel John had done just what this aorist affirms, so that the 2d verse not only identifies the author as the Apostle John but clearly proves that the gospel preceded Revelation. Moreover, John's method of certifying his gospel is the method of certifying Revelation, as you may easily see by comparing John xix, 35; xxi, 24, with Revelation xxi, 8. But there is a more convincing internal proof of John's authorship: The unique Christology of the gospel and letters is the Christology of this book. In the gospel Christ is the Logos, and so in Revelation. In the gospel Christ is the Light of the World, the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the light. The whole sweep of the book of Revelation is based upon Christ as the light of the world. In John's gospel alone, Christ is the

Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. In the book of Revelation, *all along,* Christ is the Lamb that has been slain. In other words, unless a man has a purpose to serve or is biased by doctrinal prejudice, unless he be a slave to presuppositions, he must admit that the argument in favour of Johannine authorship is overwhelming, both external and internal. And I say to you now, no book of the New Testament is better accredited as apostolic than the book of Revelation. You may unhesitatingly accept it as the culmination of God's inspired Word.

Our next question on introduction is "When?" "When did he write it?" Commentators adopt one or the other of two dates. For obvious reasons, one class say it was written about A.D. 68 in the reign of Nero. Rationalists generally adopt this date in order to eliminate the element of prophecy by applying its statements to the destruction of Jerusalem. The reason that prompts them to push back the date of Revelation led them to push forward the date of Daniel and the latter part of Isaiah. As far as possible, they ever seek to eliminate the supernatural element in prophecy.

My first objection to that theory is that there is no witness in history that so dates it. I know there are men who conjecture it, but I mean a WITNESS. There are enough witnesses to the contrary like Ireneus. "John saw this revelation just a little while ago at the close of the reign of Domitian." Any reasonable mind must see that the condition of the seven churches of Asia described in this book was absolutely impossible A.D. 68. That is the time Paul wrote the second letter to Timothy, before John had anything on earth to do with the churches of Asia. It is evident from chapters ii and iii that there has been a long interval of time between

Paul's work at Ephesus and his letters to Timothy, and the time when John writes this book. Nero's persecution was local; he never banished anybody to Patmos. Nero's persecution while very bitter, both Paul and Peter dying in it, was limited to Rome or the nearby parts of Italy. This persecution which put John in the position to write this book is a world-wide persecution that reaches the very outskirts of the kingdom of God. So, when you ask me to set the date, I am perfectly confident when I say to you that it was written A.D. 95 or 96, toward the close of the reign of Domitian, John having been banished to the Isle of Patmos, working in the mines in that island—banished from Ephesus, where the persecution reached him. That is the date.

Our next question: What the occasion of the book? Here the answer is not only easy, but intensely interesting. John was an old man. He stood alone; all the other apostles had long since passed away. The progress of the gospel, mighty and triumphant in Paul's day, had been blocked, edicts went forth proscribing every word of New Testament writing, requiring it to be burned. Women were dragged before the legal tribunals and commanded to adjure Christ and worship heathen gods, or be thrown to the lions. The fire burnt throughout all Christendom at this time. Of course there was great discouragement. Now, here comes this book. It is to reawaken faith, hope, love and courage in God's people. It is to show them that the clouds will pass away, it is to show them that, however heavy the hand or the heel of the tyrant, truth will yet prevail, and that ultimately the whole wide world will be conquered for our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the occasion of the book. It was to flash on the canvas as the last scene of revelation the facts of the future of the churches, of their

triumphs in the struggle in which they were engaged, and of the ultimate glorious victory, and it met the occasion.

As I have told you, ever since it was written it has made the heart leap and the soul exult. Since the book of Revelation no true Christian has ever doubted the ultimate outcome.

The next thing, what is the book? That being the occasion, what is the book? Follow me closely: Most of it is declared to be prophecy: It proposes to set forth the things that shall be. But you must note this modification—it is apocalypse as well as prophecy. The Greek word "Apocalypse" means revelation, unveiling, and if the future be unveiled in that sense it is the same as prophecy, but it has this distinction from ordinary prophecy: Ordinary prophecy is the utterance of the prophet concerning what God said to the prophet. Apocalypse is a vision that shows you the *picture* of the thing. For instance, this is apocalypse: "In the year that Uzziah died," says Isaiah, "I saw the Heavenly King; I saw his throne lifted up," and there follows a description of the vision of the throne of God—and that was revelation—apocalypse—seen in a vision. In the same way Ezekiel, when he saw the Cherubim and the wheels full of eyes, and the faces looking every way. That is apocalypse. That is prophecy visualized.

In the third place, it is not only prophecy that is apocalypse, but it is prophecy that is *symbolic*. What is prophesied is not presented in plain words, as when Jonah said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." But it is apocalypse presented in symbol. For instance: "I saw a woman with a rainbow upon her brow, and the moon and stars at her feet." That is a symbol. "I saw another woman clothed in purple and

scarlet, sitting upon a seven-headed ten-horned beast." That is a symbol. Now, when you interpret a symbol, you must not interpret literally, and there is where the most foolish interpretations of Revelation come in. Where it says, "I saw a woman and the man-child she bore," etc., some make it mean a real woman, the Virgin Mary and the man-child Jesus Christ. But a symbolic woman does not mean a real woman. So Paul in an allegory makes Hagar the Jerusalem that now is and Sarah the Heavenly Jerusalem. And when this book tells of a beast coming up out of the sea, it does not mean a real beast. You cannot interpret the book of Revelation unless you keep your eye on the fact that it is symbolic apocalyptic prophecy.

But we are not yet through with the question, "What is the book?" If you mean what is the book in the sense of *its theme,* the answer is very different. Its theme is determined by its key-passages. The key-passages of the book of Revelation are i, 12-20; x, 7; xi, 15; xix, 6-9. The first is the vision of light, the second and third show "the finishing of this mystery of the Kingdom," and the fourth its glorious consummation.

In other words, the book of Revelation is designed to show that the whole world shall be lighted by the churches, which are the light-bearers reflecting the original light of their Lord in heaven. That this world-wide illumination shall be in the Spirit's dispensation and through the gospel.

The theme, then, of Revelation—God help me to impress it upon you, for your reception or rejection of it will make you a pessimist or an optimist—the theme of this book is that the evangelization of this world, the salvation of every man to be saved in this world, will be brought about by the means of Christ shining, not

personally but as reflected in the candlesticks, or the churches; that all the kingdoms of this world shall be brought into subjection to Jesus Christ through the very gospel you are preaching now, and not by miraculous powers attending the final advent.

It does not mean that the world will become worse and worse and worse, and that the gospel will fail and that the Spirit will fail, and that all the original instrumentalities of salvation will play out, leaving salvation to be accomplished by the final advent. Revelation does not signify that at all. I want you to set yourselves afire with that thought of the key-passages.

II

AN ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK

I AM to present to you in this chapter an analysis of the whole book of Revelation. The idea underlying this analysis is that no man ought to attempt to interpret a book until he has thought through it—all through it—and arranged its matter in his own mind, correlating its parts and signifying their relative importance. The analysis proper will be given at the close of the chapter, but just now I submit some comments on it.

I give you first of all the brief analysis of our Saviour Himself. In the 19th verse of the first chapter: "Write, therefore, (1) the things which thou sawest; (2) the things which are; (3) the things which shall come to pass hereafter." The things which John saw, refers to the vision in the 12th to the 16th verses inclusive. That is what he saw. "I turned to see the voice that spake with me, and having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like unto the Son of man, clothed in garments down to the foot, and girded about at the breast with a golden girdle. And his head and hair were white as wool—white as snow, and his eyes were as flames of fire, and his feet looked like unto burnished brass that had been refined in a furnace; and his voice was as the voice of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword,

and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." That is what he saw.

The second division was "the things that are." "The things that are" are set forth in chapters ii, iii, iv and v. These are the things that are, and consist of two subdivisions. First, the state of the churches, not as they seem to be to themselves, but as God saw them to be. That is the earth-scene of the things that are, and a very discouraging view it is.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, among the things that are, is a heavenly scene—it reveals the throne of Grace, with all of its agencies and activities in behalf of the imperfect churches—and that is an encouraging view.

Then the things that shall be hereafter commence at the sixth chapter and extend to the end of the book. That is the prophetic part of the book.

Now, that is the Saviour's analysis. It is my purpose to give you my own elaboration of His analysis—not an improvement, you understand, but an elaboration of it. And even as fully as I give it to you, there will be, when we come to the interpreting of the book and develop the analysis, a number of subdivisions that cannot be put down in an outline.

The first part of my own outline is the author's introduction to the book. In a general sense the whole of the first chapter is devoted to that. It commences first by giving the title of the book. That is, its origin, its medium of communication, its nature, how certified, to whom certified, and its value. That is presented in the 1st to 3d verse.

The second part of the author's introduction is the greetings to the churches, from the 4th verse to the 8th verse. Following the method of nearly all New Testa-

ment writers, he commences with a salutation, or thanksgiving, or invocation.

The third part of the author's introduction commences at the 9th verse, and tells you how, when, under what circumstances, he came to write this book. This includes the voice that he heard and the vision that he saw, and the effect on himself of that vision, and the explanation of the vision by Him who gave it. Now, that is the author's introduction to the book.

The book consists of a series of revelations, each one distinct from every other one, and the first revelation commences at the 12th verse of the first chapter, and extends to the 16th verse inclusive. That vision is a revelation of our Lord in His glory, and in His relation to the churches and pastors, with an indication of the mission of the churches and the pastors. That is the first great revelation of the book. The revelation of our Lord, not in His humiliation, not in the state that He was in before He came to the earth, not in the state that He was in while on the earth, but in His glorified humanity. We have before us a vivid picture of Jesus as the one who was dead, but is alive to die no more. This first revelation is intensely interesting—a revealing of Jesus as He now is in His glorified state, and in His relation to the churches and the preachers that are to reflect His light in the world.

In thinking about Jesus many people use the memory only, as in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They think of Him as born in Bethlehem, as cradled in a manger, as a little child in the temple, as being baptized, and through the Spirit inducted in His earthly mission, as the teacher of parables and the worker of miracles. Or they think of Him on the Cross, or in the grave—all in

the past. How intensely important to us, then, is a vision of Jesus now.

The second revelation—chapters ii and iii—is an earth-scene of the state of the churches just as Jesus sees them—not what they suppose themselves to be, but what they are in the white light of Omniscience and Holiness. We call this part of the book the letters to the seven churches, but these letters simply give to each church a view of itself as God sees it. For instance: one church had a name to live, but God saw it to be dead; one church thought it was rich and mighty and had need of nothing, but God saw it to be miserable and poor and blind and naked. One church supposed itself to be exceedingly orthodox, and yet God saw it was compromising with the worst form of idolatry.

You are not to understand—I beg you not to understand—that these letters to the churches are prophecies. You must not understand them as seven prophetic periods, the first period in which Christendom is in the state of the Ephesus church, and the second in the state of the Smyrna church, and the last period in the state of the Laodicean church. Some contend that these seven churches represent seven periods of Christianity—that is a pre-millennial misconception. What these seven churches were at that time you will find churches to be just now. All of them won't be like the Ephesus church, but some of them will. All of them will not be like the Philadelphia church, but some of them will. All of them will not be like Laodicea, but some of them will. I say the result of that revelation is exceedingly discouraging when viewed with the first revelation. The first revelation shows the world lighted by the churches, the next revelation discounts it by the defective condition of the churches.

The third revelation, the second of the things that are, is a heaven-scene, chapters iv and v. The throne of grace in heaven, with a vision of a Triune God and the Cherubim, and all the angelic activities that are to aid the churches to do their work. I would not throw out the fourth and fifth chapters of Revelation for all the gold in this world. Every time I get blue over the study of the state of the churches, I turn these pages over, open to the fourth and fifth chapters and read of the throne of grace in heaven. That puts hope into the work of the churches.

The fourth revelation commences at the sixth chapter and 1st verse, extending to and including the 1st verse of the eighth chapter. That is prophecy—the opening of the seals. The book that was sealed is the book of future events, and now the Lion of the tribe of Judah will break its seals and let you see the successive future events. What the seals present, from a single viewpoint, extends from the time John wrote to the climax of the book, and the end of time. It is a complete view. It is a view of the gospel as that gospel is preached. It will be explained to you that the horses that come forth represent the different receptions given to the gospel as it is preached, and you are to understand that that view is a complete view, except the climax—that is reserved until you get to the end of the book. If you want to know, in general terms, the result of preaching the gospel until the great climax comes, you have it symbolically outlined in the opening of the seals, from the beginning of the sixth chapter to the 1st verse of the eighth chapter inclusive. That verse is misplaced—it ought to be the closing verse of chapter vii.

The analysis next presents the fifth revelation—the sounding of the trumpets. That also is a complete view

from the beginning to the end, as was the seals. It does not follow in its events the seal events, but it goes back to where the seal events commence, and parallels it—it is a synchronous, not chronological, view of the gospel of Jesus Christ *as it is prayed*. The key-passage is the eighth chapter and 4th verse to 6th verse. That chapter shows every trumpet sound is a response—not to a sermon as in the case of the seals—but to a prayer. It is one of the most instructive parts of the book. It will show you that the world's evangelization is not to be accomplished exclusively by preaching—that praying has a great deal to do with it. Whenever a trumpet sounds, it is not a reply to your sermon, but it is a reply, maybe, to some poor widow that prayed while you preached.

The sixth revelation is another complete view from beginning to end, synchronous with the others, and it presents an institution under the symbol of a woman, the true church, as opposed to the false church under the symbol of another woman. The true church and the false church viewed as opposing institutions, is the biggest part of the book. It extends from the twelfth chapter and 1st verse to the nineteenth chapter and 10th verse. The true church and the apostate church viewed as institutions. The Bible knows nothing of a universal time church, whether visible or invisible. There are churches, and there is a church as an institution. It is always churches in Revelation, but the church as an institution is symbolized by this woman. She has the radiance of the sun, crowned with the stars, the moon is under her feet. But the other woman is dressed in scarlet and purple, and is seated upon a beast that in his original appearance came up out of the sea. He had seven heads and ten horns, and this woman sits on him.

She is the counterfeit church. The symbols of this vision are three distinct things—a sea-beast, an earth-beast, a woman. This section includes the seven vials, or bowls, of wrath. The events including the seven bowls of wrath do not wait until the seal events are passed away and the trumpet events are passed away, and then follow successively, but it is a complete view from the beginning—from the time John wrote until Jesus comes. Here is a view of the true church as an institution and the counterfeit church as an institution, and the conflict between them.

The seventh revelation commences at the nineteenth chapter and 11th verse and extends to the twentieth chapter and 10th verse. That ought to be put into a separate chapter, for it is an entirely distinct revelation. It is split up by arbitrary chapter divisions. It, too, goes back to the beginning and reaches to the end. It is not the church as an institution, and the apostate church, as in the last case, but in it Christians are presented as soldiers under the leadership of Jesus Christ in a Holy War. And that Holy War is waged against the false prophet, the beast, and Satan. In this war Satan is bound, the Millennium comes, and then the revival of evil after the Millennium and the last great battle. That is the Holy War, and the centre part of it is the Millennium.

To show you that these events are synchronous, the same white horse that came forth when the first seal was broken, appears now with the same rider leading in a conflict between good and evil. It is a war waged between Christ and His soldiers and the devil and his soldiers, and the war-song is the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm. That is the Holy War Song. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until

I make thine enemies thy footstool. Rule them with a rod of iron, as thy word goeth forth from Zion, and from the day that thou leadest out thine armies, thy young men shall be volunteers, and as multitudinous as the drops of the dew in the dawn of the morning."

So far, four revelations have been synchronous. Each one came nearly to the climax and stopped. Now we come to the eighth revelation (xx, 11-15), the coming of the Lord and the general judgment. This chapter is not only the climax of the preceding one, which was the fourth synchronous view, but it is the suppressed climax of all preceding views. The seventh seal is followed by silence—the last thing is not told. The seventh trumpet is about to be sounded, but it does not sound. It only says that when it *is* sounded the mystery of the Kingdom of God will be finished; and every other view comes right up to but not quite to the climax. Now, the climax is the eighth revelation, or the coming of the Lord and the general judgment.

Let me impress the thought by repetition. All the other views approach this climax and stop. The seventh seal is followed by silence (viii, 1). The seventh trumpet comes to the world conquest and announces the judgment at hand. The bowls of wrath find an end after the battle of Har-Magedon, before the judgment. The true church is brought within sight of the marriage of the Lamb, which is an unfinished picture. The climax of all of them is this eighth revelation, or the coming of the Lord and the general judgment.

The ninth revelation is the state of the saints in glory after the judgment (xxi, 1-xxii, 5). This is the grand climax. The coming of the Lord was the climax, but the final state of the redeemed is the grand climax. The first climax ends all the four synchronous views,

and this grand climax rounds up the whole book, showing the final estate of the redeemed in glory, and of the wicked in eternal punishment.

The eleventh item of the outline, the certification of the whole book, with its closing invitation and warnings (xxii, 6-20). This section tells you three things: The certification of an entire book, which you will find the most solemn attestation this earth has ever known, and after the certification is the invitation—"The Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely." It closes with the warning: "Whosoever shall add to or take from this book," etc.

The twelfth and last item of my analysis is the closing salutation. This is the last verse of the book (xxii, 21). I have put this general view of the book before you at the start: I would not attempt to interpret a book that I had not thought through, and not be like one beating the bush to flush meanings or conjectures—that go off at a tangent like birds when flushed. This analysis enables you to mark down each bird, and bring them all again into one covey.

The theme of the book is the mystery of the Kingdom of God. It shows that this whole world, every continent of it, every foot of it, all the places that are on it, lost through the first Adam, will be reconciled through the second Adam, and the instrumentalities by which the gross darkness that is on the world through the usurper Satan, is finally dispersed, are the churches reflecting Christ the Sun of righteousness, and the preachers here on the earth empowered by the Holy Ghost.

Let no man impress your minds that salvation, at the latter part of the world, is to be brought about by

a different instrumentality from that at the beginning of the world. God never had but one plan of salvation. Settle it as a fundamental point of your theology that the plan of salvation has always been one plan. Every man on earth that has been saved to date, and every man that will be saved on this earth, will be saved by the blood of Christ preached by the gospel and applied by the Holy Spirit. Not a soul, not one, will be saved after Christ comes. In His first advent He came as a sin-offering unto salvation. In His second advent He comes apart from salvation, or apart from a sin-offering to salvation. He comes to wind up the affairs of the world, raise the dead, and judge the world. He who, in his theory, seeks to point the people of God to some other way of enlightening the world than by the original plan —Christ's light reflecting in the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit—is to my mind in his theory (bless God, not often in his practices!) opposed to the plan of salvation. There is to be no saving dispensation after the Holy Ghost dispensation, and the Holy Ghost dispensation lasts while Christ is on the throne up yonder and the Holy Ghost is here on the earth, a vicegerent, testifying about Christ, testifying through the churches and the preachers, and the people of God.

If I thought that the gospel trumpet was of some base metal, iron or brass, to be succeeded by a more precious trumpet of silver, gold or diamonds, under some other dispensation, I should lose my present high respect for the gospel.

Another general remark: When we come to the details of the exposition, I will stop at certain points in the series of lectures and give you a special discussion on certain special themes. For example: the symbolic numbers of Revelation, as the 7 in the 7 churches, the 7 Spirits

of God, the 7 seals, the 7 trumpets, the 7 bowls, and other numbers. Then there will be a special discussion on the antichrists of the Scriptures, and there have been a number, and the confusion of commentaries is in mixing the antichrists. Then it will be necessary to have a special discussion on the Millennium. What its precursors; what is it; what follows it? Then a discussion of the final advent of our Lord. You may rest assured that the same Jesus that died, was buried, and was raised again, and who ascended into heaven, whom the heavens must retain unto the time of the restoration of all things, will Himself finally come to His people here on earth, visibly, audibly, palpably, personally, and no doubt of it. As His first advent was the highest peak in the view of the Old Testament, so His final advent is the highest peak in the view of the New Testament. But, it is to be hoped that you will not beguile yourself with supposing that every time a coming of the Lord is referred to it means His final advent. On this fact I hope to convince you in these lectures. In a certain sense, and every time in a Scriptural sense, there are many comings of the Lord.

SYNOPSIS OF ANALYSIS

Our Lord's own brief outline (i, 19)

Write:

1. *"The things which thou sawest"* (i, 12-16). The vision of the glorified Lord, source of all light, in His relation to the churches and pastors, and their consequent mission as the light-bearers of the world.
2. *"And the things which are":* (1st) the state of the imperfect churches and pastors as God sees them.

An *earth-scene* tending to discouragement (chapters ii and iii). (2d) The throne of grace, with all its agencies and activities, helping the imperfect churches and pastors (chapters iv and v). A *heaven-scene,* tending to encouragement.

3. *"And the things which shall come to pass hereafter"* (chapters vi-xxii). Showing that by the heavenly helps the imperfect lower lights shall ultimately illumine the whole world.

The Teacher's Elaborate Analysis

The author's own introduction to the book (chapter i)

1. The title of the book, its nature, origin, medium, by whom signified, to whom, for whom, its value (i, 1).

2. The human author identified (i, 2).

3. To whom addressed, first clause of verse 4, and last of verse 11.

4. The author's greeting and doxology (i, 4-8).

5. The author's account of how, when, where and under what circumstances he was commissioned to write (i, 9-20). This includes the voice and the vision, the effect of the vision on him, and the Lord's explanation of it.

I. *The First Revelation—What John Saw* (i, 12-16).

Or a revelation of the glorified Lord Himself, now shining as the Sun of righteousness, source of all spiritual life, in His relation to the churches and pastors on earth, the lower lights, commissioned to reflect the heavenly light and so illumine the whole world.

II. *The Second Revelation* (chapters ii and iii).

The state of the churches and pastors, not as

they see themselves, nor as the world sees them, but as they really are in God's sight. This is an *earth-scene* of "the things that are," and, on account of the imperfections of these agencies for world illumination, tends to discouragement.

Note 1. The real condition of no two churches is the same.

Note 2. The varied provisions for remedying imperfections adapted to each special need.

Note 3. The various adversaries all directed by one leading adversary.

Note 4. The hope lies in Christ's "walking among the candlesticks" in constant supervision and continually speaking through the indwelling Spirit.

III. *The Third Revelation* (chapters iv and v).

This is a *heaven-scene* of "the things that are." It is a revelation of the throne of grace with all its agencies and activities employed to help the imperfect churches and pastors illumine the world. This scene tends to encouragement. It is the sure promise of ultimate triumph.

"The Things That Shall Come to Pass Hereafter"
(The prophetic part of the Book:
Chapters vi-xxii).

IV. *The Fourth Revelation,* or the opening of the seals (vi, 1-viii, 1).

This section begins the prophetic element which continues to the end of the book. Its design is to foreshow the various effects of the gospel *as preached.* It is a complete view from this angle of vision from John's day to the end of things,

suppressing only the final climax for the time being (see viii, 1: which properly is the last verse of chapter vii), with the temporary silence on the opening of the seventh seal, which silence will be broken when at the end of the book the climax is supplied.

V. *The Fifth Revelation* (viii, 2-xi, 19).

The sounding of the trumpets, or the gospel *as prayed.*

Note 1. The key-passage of this section (viii, 3-6), that every trumpet sounded is a response to *prayer,* and not to a sermon. This also is a complete view from that day to the end of time, hinting at but suppressing the final climax, as did the seals.

Note 2. That while it is a complete view, like the seals, it is from a different angle of vision.

Note 3. That its events are not successive to the seal events, but synchronize with them. The two views are parallel.

Note 4. The remarkable episode (x, 1-xi, 14) following the sixth trumpet which gives a distinct but subordinate revelation, and which includes six of the seven thunders and two of the three bowls, the little book, the measuring of the temple, the death and revival of the two witnesses.

Note 5. Connecting x, 7, with xi, 15, we see not only a key to the meaning of the book, but this view is synchronological with the seals.

VI. *The Sixth Revelation* (xii, 1-xix, 10).

The true church *as an institution,* symbolized as a glorious woman (xii, 1), and the later apostate church as an opposing institution symbolized as an harlot (xvii, 1-6).

This also is a complete view from John's day to the end of time, only from a new angle of vision, and is parallel with the preceding synchronous views of the seals and the trumpets, and, like the others, lacks only the final climax.

Note 1. That the one great dominant adversary is Satan (xii, 3, 9).

Note 2. That his persecutions through world-governments drive her into the wilderness—obscurity—for a long time (xii, 6).

Note 3. That when he had failed to destroy her by heathen world-power, he causes to rise among the nations a new world-power, i.e., a union of church and state, "spotted like the leopard," which makes war with the saints (xiii, 1-10). Then develops from this union a Papal head (xiii, 11-18), who assumes all power civil and religious, and from these two develop an institution—the apostate church (xvii, 1-6).

Note 4. In this symbolism: (*a*) A woman represents the church, true or apostate, as an institution. (*b*) The sea represents the nations. (*c*) A sea-beast, as in Daniel, represents a world-power over the nations. (*d*) A spotted beast, a world-power dominated by apostate Christianity. (*e*) The earth-beast, in the guise of a lamb, but with the voice of the dragon, represents an assumed earthly head to both church and state.

Note 5. In this section come the seven plagues, or seven bowls of wrath poured on the apostate church, and the great war of Har-Magedon.

VII. *The Seventh Revelation,* or the Holy War between the saints and the emissaries of Satan (xix, 11-xx, 10).

This is also a complete view from John's day to the end of time, and, like the three preceding, needs only the climax. It, like the rest, has its own angle of vision. As Matthew, Mark, Luke and John present the life of our Lord in four parallel views, each complete from its angle of vision, so here are four complete synchronous views of His Kingdom, each from its own angle of vision, to wit: 1. The seals, or the gospel *as preached.* 2. The trumpets, or the gospel *as prayed.* 3. The true church as an institution, opposed by the apostate church as an institution. 4. The Holy War, and the salvation of the Jews.

Note 1. The progress of the conquest of the western nations, culminating in the Millennium (xix, 11-xx, 6).

Note 2. The progress of the conquest of the eastern nations, Gog and Magog (xx, 7-10).

As this section is a distinct revelation, complete in itself, it should not be broken by arbitrary chapter divisions, but should make one distinct chapter.

VIII. *The Eighth Revelation* (xx, 11-15).

The final advent of Our Lord, the resurrection of all the dead and the one general final judgment fixing the eternal destiny of saint and sinner. This is the climax which caps all the four synchronous views.

IX. *The Ninth Revelation,* or Grand Climax of the book (xxi, 1-xxii, 5).

Paradise regained.

X. *The Tenth Revelation* (xxii, 6-21).

The divine and human authentication of the

book, with assurance, promises, threats, invitations, and the author's closing salutation.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Give our Lord's brief analysis of the book, and what parts of the book belong to each division.
2. Give the teacher's elaborate analysis.
3. According to this analysis, how many revelations, and how many synchronous views, giving terminal points of each?

III

AN EXPOSITION OF THE INTRODUCTORY PASSAGES

Revelation I

HAVING clearly in mind the analysis of the entire book already given, we shall begin with the interpretation of the book of Revelation.

The first word in this book, as in the Old Testament books, gives its name: Greek, "Apocalupsis"—Latin: "Revelatio"—English: "Revelation." They all mean literally an unveiling of that which is hidden.

The source of the revelation, as you see from the text, is God the Father. The medium of the revelation is Jesus Christ. The agent employed in signifying it is an interpreting angel. The revelation is made to John the apostle for the people of God. Notice that the word "signify" is appropriately used, since the revelation is to be made known by signs or symbols. The angel, who signifies it, is the author of the great voice as of a trumpet in the 10th verse. We hear his voice again at the beginning of the fourth chapter, and he reappears on the scene in the last chapters of the book. The 2d verse tells us *which John* received this revelation in these words: "Who *bare* witness of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw." It is quite important to know when John *bare* witness of the word of God. The tense is the

"aorist" and usually, according to grammatical construction, refers to something in the completed past. Following this sense of the "aorist" we are bound to construe the 2d verse as identifying the John to whom this revelation was made, and the bearing witness would refer to the witness that he had already borne in his gospel. This construction would conclusively establish the authorship of the book. It would prove that the author of the gospel is also the author of this book, and that the gospel was written first.

The only escape from this conclusion is to make the witness-bearing refer to what John now does concerning this revelation which he is receiving. Many great scholars insist on making this the meaning, and calling the tense the *epistolary* aorist. I see no necessity for adopting this latter construction. By reference to John's gospel, and indeed to his first letter, we see that he there claims to have borne witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw and heard. In the 3d verse we have the words: "*Blessed is he* that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy." We know that in later times the churches had readers who would read to them any communication received and explain the communication. The rest of the church would hear. We have already found that Paul gave directions that his letter to one church should be read to another church, and the letter to that church be also read to the first church named. So it is unnecessary to go to a later date to find the origin of a reader to the churches. The New Testament itself gives the origin. From the 4th to the 6th verses inclusive we have John's greeting *to the seven churches of Asia* to whom the entire book is addressed. Not only all of the second and third

chapters are specifically devoted to special messages for the churches named, but at the end of the book, chapter xxii, 16, we have these words referring back to the whole book, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches."

It is important to note in this connection our Lord's use of the word "ecclesia." In Matthew, sixteenth chapter, He says: "I will build my church," using the term to signify the institution. In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew He says, "tell it to the church," referring to whatever particular congregation the decision of the case of discipline belongs. Many times in the book of Revelation He uses the word church, and in every case the reference is to particular churches. Our Lord's usage of the word knows nothing of a now existing universal church, whether visible or invisible. He does not say to the church of Asia, but the seven churches of Asia. There is nothing in His use of the word to indicate the existence of church in any provincial, national, world-wide or denominational sense. On the contrary, He seems to guard very carefully against such a use of the term. It is true that in the twelfth chapter, without using the term church, He does present the idea of the church as an institution under the symbol of the woman arrayed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, which woman later becomes, in the nineteenth chapter, the bride of Christ or the church in glory.

Carefully note the expression in the 6th verse: "and he made us to be a *kingdom* and to be priests unto his God and Father." Again we have the past tense, signifying that the kingdom already exists. It would be strange to make one part of the sentence mean a kingdom to come, and the other part to mean an existing

priesthood. We know from many scriptures that Christians are now priests offering spiritual sacrifices unto God, and so also they now constitute a kingdom. The kingdom is now and has been since the God of heaven in the days of His flesh set it up. It will become the kingdom in glory, but it is a kingdom in actual fact now.

The *7th verse* needs very careful interpretation. "Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him, even so, Amen." Alford holds this verse to be the *key-passage* of the book, and so does every pre-millennialist. They are sure in their minds that it refers to the final advent of our Lord. I do not wish to startle you, but it is necessary to ask where John obtains this imagery. Your attention has already been called to the most notable fact in connection with this book, that while not directly quoting the Old Testament, it teems and bristles with references to the Old Testament. All of its analogues are taken from the Old Testament. The Paradise of Genesis, the plagues of Exodus, the visions of God in Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and the marvellous visions of Zechariah, furnish the moulding of the book. Where, then, the question recurs, do we find the origin of the phrase used in the 7th verse? In the seventh chapter of Daniel we have "One like unto the Son of man coming in the clouds to the Ancient of days and receiving the kingdom." This unquestionably refers to Christ's ascension and exaltation after His resurrection. In Zechariah xii, 10, we have the origin of the piercing of Christ, as follows: "And they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son." This mourning after beholding whom they had pierced is followed by the opening of a fountain for sin

and uncleanness. It is not the mourning of despair by the lost who shall see Christ at His final advent, but it is the penitential mourning that follows the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon the house of David that enables them to see Christ pierced and held up before them in the gospel and thus find life. John has already, in his gospel, referred to this passage in Zechariah, applying it to Christ crucified and not to Christ coming at His final advent. The language of the gospel is: "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water; and he that saw it *bare* record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he sayeth true, that ye might believe, for these things were done that the scriptures might be fulfilled: They shall look on him whom they have pierced." Since the text "the coming in the clouds" and "piercing" and "mourning" are all borrowed from the Old Testament and all refer to Christ crucified and held up before sinners, who, through the pouring out of the Spirit, are enabled to recognize Him and believe in Him and thereby be saved, we are hardly warranted in making this passage the key-passage of the book, and certainly are not warranted in referring it to the final advent of our Lord. The key-passage of the book we will consider directly. It is the purpose of that 7th verse to refer to the spiritually prompted vision of Christ by faith on the part of all the tribes of the earth.

Bearing on the statement that the kingdom now exists we may consider the 9th verse, where John says, "I, John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus . . ." Here, so certain as John then partook with them in the tribulation of persecution, and in the patience that steadfastly endured that persecution, so it is certain that he,

at the time of the writing, was a partaker with them in the existing kingdom. The 10th verse commences thus: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." It has been the safe interpretation of the fathers that the Lord's day here refers to the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath. We have already noted in Colossians that the entire system of the Jewish sabbaths, weekly, monthly, annual, septennial, and the sabbath of the Jubilee, were all nailed to the cross of Christ, being shadows and finding their substance in Christ they were abrogated; henceforth the Christian should not be judged for failing to observe the Jewish sabbatical system. He might observe that system from motives of expediency that he might gain others, but certainly not on demand and as an obligation. We have already seen in our discussion of the letter to the Hebrews the distinction between the sabbath and the seventh day. The sabbath is perpetual with all its obligations. *Hebdome,* or seventh day, was not perpetual. "Another day" is referred to, and as the Father finishing the work of creation appointed a commemorative sabbath on the seventh day, so Christ, having finished the greater work of redemption, appointed "another day," the first day of the week, so that there should remain to the people of God a sabbath-keeping.

On this, therefore, the Lord's day, or the Christian Sabbath, John was in the Spirit, and heard the angel voice as of a trumpet instructing him to write in a book the visions to be received, and send it to these seven churches of Asia. Woe to the professed Christian, and especially to the preacher, who hears no *voices* and sees no visions. We thus hear and see when we are *in the Spirit.* The man who has no sabbath-keeping (sabbatismos), who consecrates no Lord's day, will not likely be in the Spirit.

From the 12th to the 16th verses inclusive, we have a remarkable vision which is the key-passage to the interpretation of the whole book of Revelation. The elements of the vision are, first, seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the candlesticks a vision of Christ as the Sun of righteousness. He holds in His right hand seven stars and out of His mouth proceeds a sharp two-edged sword. This vision He explains Himself: The candlesticks represent the churches; the stars represent the messengers or pastors of the churches; the two-edged sword represents His word, or the gospel. The whole vision is one of light. The central light—Christ, the Sun of righteousness; the lower lights—the churches and the preachers; the instrumentality of dispensing the light—the Word of God.

In the next chapter we see that while Christ is in the midst of the churches, He is not there in person, but through the other paraclete, the Holy Spirit, who is His "alter ego," His vicar here upon earth. John in his gospel had previously represented Christ as the light of the world, but since He ascended into heaven this light is reflected in the churches and preachers through the Spirit and by the Word. The object of the vision is to show that the whole world will be illumined by the churches and the preachers in the dispensation of the gospel, which dispensation is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, for when Christ speaks to the churches He says: "If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth to the churches." The doctrine of this vision is of incalculable importance. It teaches that the Spirit dispensation, or Word dispensation through the churches and the preachers, is to accomplish the whole work of the application of the salvation achieved by our Lord's vicarious death. We will find in every subse-

quent revelation this ruling thought: the world to be illumined by these light-bearers. There is no hint of any other source or medium or instrumentality of light. There is no hint that the churches will fail on the earth and that some other divine interposition must take place to finish the mystery of the Kingdom of God. This is in accord with the great commission in the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew: "Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo! I will be with you all the days, even unto the end of the world." The pessimist who believes that the object of the gospel is simply and only to be a witness and to take out a few here and there of the lost world and that light will become feebler and dimmer until the second advent, and then by marvellous displays of miraculous power, the return of Christ in person to supersede the Spirit, the world is to be conquered for Christ—this view, I say, is at war with all the teachings of this book, and of the other New Testament books. The Spirit, through the churches and the gospel, will accomplish all the conquests that are to be accomplished and Christ's return is not as a sin-offering unto salvation, but to raise the dead, judge the world, and wind up the affairs of this kingdom preparatory to turning it over to the Father. The final, personal, visible, audible, palpable return of Jesus Christ to the earth, with whatever displays of divine power, is not for the conversion of any man. It ends the days of salvation. If we hold in our minds that practically the gospel will be a failure and that the world will grow worse and worse until the second advent of Christ, and that we are to look for the great

forces of redemption after He comes back, then we cannot, except with a very limited faith, press the mission work for the evangelization of the world. It will not be in our hearts to hope to see missions accomplish the salvation of men. We may count, therefore, the whole book of Revelation as a vision of ever-increasing light until by the gospel through the Spirit the whole world is flooded with light—and indeed this idea is manifest as the governing thought in every subsequent revelation until the final consummation of eternal light presented in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, the closing chapters of the book.

In the 17th verse we are told that when John saw the glorified Christ he fell at His feet as one dead. It is the uniform teaching of the Bible that the nearer we approach to God and the clearer our vision of Him, the more sensibly do we feel our sinfulness. Job had a very good opinion of himself and talked boldly of his desire to meet the Almighty face to face, but when the Almighty came, and Job stood in the white light of the holiness of God, though he was the saintliest man of his day, he cried out: "I have uttered that which I understood not, but now that mine eye seeth thee, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Isaiah, also, the saintliest man of his day, when he saw the vision of the Almighty, cried out: "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King Jehovah of Hosts." When, therefore, you hear one making the extravagant boast of his sinlessness, you may know that the boast argues his distance from God rather than his nearness. If he were indeed in brighter light, then would he be able to

see the spots upon his garments that are invisible to his state of semi-darkness.

This vision represents our Lord as a royal priest on His throne. The glory of His exalted state, and of the authority with which He is invested when understood by faith, dispels fear; though the saint is so imperfect, His voice comes: "Fear not. I am the first and the last, and the Living One, and I was dead and behold I am alive for ever more, and I have the keys of death and of Hades and I have the keys of David, with power to open so that none can shut, and power to shut so that none can open."

To the despondent Christian, a vision of this exalted Christ is a sure cure of both his despondency and of his fear. It is a vision not of our Lord in the days of His humiliation when He had not where to lay His head, when He was emptied of the glory of His original state in heaven, but it is a vision of the risen, ascended and exalted Jesus on the throne of the universe, and as His presence is felt in the churches. Through the Spirit the word preached by the churches is the power of God unto salvation.

I cannot refrain from reference to an incident in my own life in the summer of 1905. I was on a train in the Panhandle and greatly distressed in mind as I thought of the imperfections of the churches and of the preachers. The despondency increased when I saw in all the Southwest, a territory larger than all the rest of the South, no provision made for training preachers to be great and efficient in their ministry. When I saw representatives of some ministerial training schools coming into Texas and other states of the Southwest with their minds poisoned on the vital doctrines of the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, His

vicarious expiation, the transcendent power of the Holy Spirit, my despondency increased the more. How can we have in the Southwest a school for the adequate training of our preachers? How can we safeguard it from heresy when it is established? How can we make it a barrier against the inflowing tide of semi-infidelity in the pulpit? It was at this very juncture that I recalled to mind this vision which John saw on the Isle of Patmos, and so vivid was the recollection that it was to me as if I heard Jesus speak audibly: "Fear not, I am the Living One. I was dead, but am alive to die no more." Instantly my heart leaped with joy and I half rose from my seat saying to myself: "Jesus is alive, and if Jesus be alive He can manifest that life now as well as He manifested His life on earth and even with greater power. If when alive in the flesh He could still the storm, heal the sick, raise the dead, reconcile us to God by His vicarious death, then surely after His resurrection, ascension and exaltation, with all authority in heaven and on earth in His hands, He can make it possible to do anything desirable for the efficiency of His churches and His preachers. It would not, then, be necessary to rely upon historic monumental evidences, but each of us now could have sensible demonstration that Jesus is alive and King forever." It made an epoch in my life. It gave me the faith and courage with which to undertake the establishment of the seminary of which I am president.

In the 19th verse we have our Lord's analysis of the book of Revelation: "Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter." What he saw was this vision. The things which are, were: First, the revelation of our glorified Lord, in His relation to the

churches and pastors, and their consequent mission as light-bearers. Second, the state of the imperfect churches here upon earth as set forth in the second and third chapters. Third, the revelation of the throne of grace in heaven, as set forth in the fourth and fifth chapters. Fourth, the things which shall come to pass hereafter, are the things presented in all the rest of the book from the sixth chapter to the end.

In this interpretation of the book, while on some details the teaching cannot be dogmatic, yet the main lines of thought are just as clear as the main lines of thought in the four gospels. A patient study of the book will be of incalculable advantage to us. As we pray and study and have faith, the assurance will settle upon our hearts that whatever may be the temporary ebbs and flows, the outcome will be that all the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ through the work of the churches and the preachers, and that earthly imperfections are more than compensated for by the great power of God from the heavenly throne of our Lord, keeping the lamps filled with oil and trimmed and burning.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Analyze the 1st verse, showing the meaning of apocalypse, its source, medium, instrument, method, to whom, for whom.
2. How may a strictly grammatical construction of the aorist or past tense of "bare witness" in 2d verse prove that the apostle John wrote both the Fourth Gospel and Revelation, and that Revelation was the later book?
3. Judging from the expression in the 3d verse, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear," and comparing it with 1 Thessalonians v, 27, and Colossians iv, 16, when originated the custom, so well attested in later days, of having "readers to the churches"? And what modern invention superseded the necessity for the custom?
4. "The seven churches that are in Asia." Counting the instances in Matthew and Revelation: (1) how many times in

the record of our Lord's own saying does the Greek word Ekklesia occur and (2) in what two senses alone, and (3) since He says "The churches of Asia," and not "The church of Asia," and since several times in chapters ii and iii He says "Hear what the Spirit saith to the churches," and not "to the church"—what is the bearing of this usage on the idea of a provincial, national or universal church?

5. Prove from the use of the word "kingdom" in verses 6 and 9 that pre-millennialists are mistaken in contending that there is yet no kingdom except an ideal one.

6. Compare verse 7 with the Old Testament analogues in Daniel vii, 13-14, and Zechariah xii, 10-14, and xiii, 1, with John xix, 37, and then answer:

(1) Is this "coming with clouds" the final advent of our Lord?

(2) Do the tribes here see Him with the natural eye in the glory of His final advent, or with the eye of faith lifted up on the cross by preaching (as in Acts ii and iii, by Peter, and in Galatians iii, 1, by Paul)? And

(3) Is the mourning when they see Him a mourning of despair or a mourning of penitence unto salvation?

7. Interpret the key-passage of the book, i, 12-16, explaining each metaphor, and then answer particularly:

(1) Is Christ present with the churches personally or through the Spirit? In answering this question consider ii, 7, 11, 17, 29; iii, 6, 13, 22.

(2) Does He, as the Sun of righteousness, shine directly or reflectively through the churches and preachers, making them the light of the world, and through the Word, represented as a sword issuing from His mouth?

(3) Trace through the book the proof that this vision of the world lighted by these instrumentalities is the key-passage.

(4) And is there anywhere in the book any proof that the world will otherwise be illumined or men saved?

IV

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECOND REVELATION

Revelation II and III

THIS section of the analysis is the second revelation, chapters ii and iii, an earth-scene of "the things that are." It consists of the letters to the seven churches, and is a revelation of their condition in God's sight. Now, upon these seven letters I wish to make some general observations.

My first is that you should find a map—generally the last map in your Bibles—of the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. That will show you the province of Asia —the southwestern part of Asia Minor. And on that map you must locate the seven churches. Commence at the southwestern coast of Asia Minor—there you will find the first church, Ephesus, a seaport, or used to be, situated on a little river that flows into the Ægean Sea. Follow the coast line north until you come to Smyrna, another seaport. Still going north you come to Pergamum, or Pergamos (either is correct). That is not a seaport, but is close to the sea. The first three churches, then, are found by following up the coast going north. The other four churches are inland, and you will find them by commencing a little north of where Pergamos is located, and by following a line south you come to the other churches in the order named: Thyatira,

Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. Now, look a little off that coast from the southwestern part of Asia Minor, and you will find a little island, barely discernible on the map, called Patmos. That is where John was. So, my first observation is that the reader should locate on a map the province of Asia, the seven churches (noting which are seaports and which are inland) and Patmos.

My next observation is based upon what we considered in the last chapter, that is, the key-passage of the book, to wit: first chapter, 12th to 16th verses, representing Christ as the original light, the Sun of righteousness, shining as the sun in its full strength, reflecting His light upon the churches, and through them here on earth His reflected light is to illuminate the world. The description of this glorified Christ shows Him in the garb of a High Priest, and invested with kingly rule —a royal priest. If that be the key-passage, then the whole of this book, up to the 11th verse of the twentieth chapter, where you strike the climax of the book—the whole of the book up to that point is what is called the Spirit's dispensation, or the dispensation of the churches, or the dispensation of the gospel preached. Everything up to the 11th verse of the twentieth chapter, where Christ comes to raise the dead and judge the world.

Now take that key-passage of Christ as the light of the world, and trace its connection through this section we are studying, chapters ii and iii. In order that you may trace it, open your Bible and read the following verses—the beginning of each letter to a church—chapter ii, verses 1, 8, 12, 18; chapter iii, verses 1, 7, 14. As you read these verses introducing what is said to each church, you will see that the titles or appellatives applying to Christ, through whom this light comes, are all citations or allusions to the first revelation. So all of this section

shows that this key-passage unlocks everything said to the churches. In the same way we may trace the key-passages through the whole of the book unlocking the meaning of every vision. The connection, therefore, between this section and the first revelation is evident in these verses.

To impress that on you perhaps you had better read these verses. Begin at the second chapter and read only the beginning of each letter to the churches: "To the angel of the church at Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." Now that is a quotation from the first chapter, where the key-passage is given; Christ is seen walking in the midst of the candlesticks; Christ is holding the seven stars in His right hand.

Now the 8th verse: "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, These things saith the first and the last, who was dead and liveth again." By reading the first chapter you will find these allusions to Christ: "The first and the last, who was dead but liveth again to die no more."

Now the 12th verse: "To the angel of the church at Pergamos write, These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword." In that first revelation a two-edged sword is represented as issuing from His mouth, standing for His word of judgment.

Now the 18th verse: "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write, These things saith the Son of God, who hath eyes like a flame of fire and feet like unto burnished brass." That is the description of His eyes and feet as seen in the first revelation.

Now the third chapter and 1st verse: "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things saith

he that hath the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars." Evidently that is an allusion to the first revelation.

7th verse: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none can shut, and he that shutteth and none can open." These things are alluded to in the first revelation.

Now the 14th verse: "And to the angel of the church of Laodicea write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God."

My third general observation is based upon Christ's own uses of the word "church" as found in Matthew and Revelation. There are twenty-three instances of Christ's using the Greek word "ecclesia"—church. In Matthew xvi, 18, He says, "I will build my church." In Matthew xviii, 17, He says, "Tell it to the church." The references in Revelation where He uses the term church or churches are the following: Chapter i, verses 4, 11, 20, and again 20; chapter ii, verses 1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 23 and 29; chapter iii, verses 1, 6, 7, 13, 14 and 22; chapter xxii, verse 16.

Now here are twenty-three examples of the use of the word "ecclesia"—church—as spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and it is evident, from a study of these twenty-three instances of the use of the word, that Christ never said anything about an invisible or universal church. His teaching is to the contrary; He does not say the church in Asia, but "the churches in Asia." He does not use the word church in any provincial sense, or state sense, or national sense, or denominational sense. This is a very convincing exhibit of the uses of the word, as coming from the lips of our

Lord, rebuking the contention of many people of the present day who talk about a universal church here on earth, whether visible or invisible—the New Testament does not know anything about either one. It is true that in the twelfth chapter and 1st verse, under the symbol of a woman, also in the seventeenth chapter and 3d verse, under the symbol of another woman, He presents first the church as an institution and then the apostate church as an institution, and it is equally true that in the nineteenth chapter and 7th and 8th verses He presents the church in glory, under the symbol of a bride, and in xxi, 9, under the symbol of the heavenly Jerusalem, a city. So that we may say that Christ used the word to describe the time church as an institution, and to name the concrete example of this institution particular churches, and to foreshadow the coming glory church—something which does not yet exist.

My fifth general observation is the significance of Christ walking amid the candlesticks, knowing, revealing, rebuking, threatening, promising. The body of each letter will show their condition: "I know thy works," or "where thou dwellest"—and the rest of the terms to the churches telling the condition of each church. He tells the things favourable and the things unfavourable, He rebukes, exhorts to amendment and closes each with a precious promise. This unseen presence, this exercise of actual omniscience, this authority to rebuke or remove, this diversity and wealth of promise, tend to produce extraordinary results: it encourages the faithful that He knows and will reward; it stimulates the backslidden to revival and amendment; it alarms the unworthy and terrifies with certain and speedy judgment.

My next general observation is that this presence of Christ in the churches is not a *personal* presence—He is

up in heaven, but He is present through the Spirit, His *alter ego,* the one that came down according to His promise to be His vicar, His vicegerent here on earth. Now, as proof that this is the meaning, read these verses: Chapter ii, 7th verse: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; verse 11: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; verse 17: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; verse 29: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; chapter iii, 6th verse: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; 13th verse: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"; 22d verse: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." So that every time He says anything to any of these churches, He closed by calling it "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." That teaches that Christ is present with His people here on earth, not in a personal sense, but through the Holy Spirit, whom He sent after He ascended into heaven. So in the great commission, "I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world," He is not with us in person: we cannot see Him, touch Him, feel Him, but He is present in the Spirit. That also shows that this whole book comes in the Spirit dispensation, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit all through the book, up to the twentieth chapter and 11th verse. Christ stays up in heaven until the time of restoration of all things. While He stays up there the Spirit represents Him down here. When He comes (twentieth chapter and 11th verse), the Spirit dispensation is ended, the gospel dispensation is ended, the gospel preaching is ended.

My seventh general observation is that the condition of no two of these churches is exactly the same. Look and see that the deficiency of one is not the deficiency of another. Ephesus is sound in doctrine, but deficient in love.

Smyrna was poor but rich. Laodicea rich but poor. Pergamos was faithful in persecution, but wanting in discipline. In Ephesus the first works were greater than the last, while in Thyatira the last works were greater than the first, and in Sardis none of its works, first or last, were perfect in God's sight. Smyrna was attaining to a crown of life, while Thyatira, having a name to live, was dead. Philadelphia glowed with fervour while Laodicea was lukewarm. I ask you to note this diversity of condition in the seven churches, that you may apply it to any seven churches in Texas. The same examination of the First Church in Fort Worth, in Dallas, Austin, Houston, San Antonio, Waxahachie, Galveston or of the seven leading churches in any one city, would reveal similar diversity of conditions in God's sight. This application goes to confirm what is evident, namely, that these are real letters to seven contemporaneous churches, and were not intended to be prophetic of seven consecutive periods, the Ephesian first, the Laodicean last. It is a travesty on sound interpretation to say: "We are now in the Laodicean period." This leads to

My eighth observation, that Christ's titles, and Christ's threats, and Christ's promises are adapted to meet the specific condition of each church as it comes up: He does not use the same threats, He does not use the same titles; He does not offer the same promises, but in every case there is an adaptation to the need, showing the infinite diversity in Christ so as to suit the diverse needs.

My ninth observation is that you may gather up into one sentence the promises made to the faithful ones in all of the churches—make one sentence of it. A special succeeding chapter will expound these promises to you. Let us make up that sentence now: the 7th verse of the second chapter: "To him that overcometh will I give

to eat of the tree of life"; verse 11 (latter part): "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death"; 17th verse: "To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon that stone a new name written which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it"; 26th verse: "To him that overcometh and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also received of my Father, and I will give him the morning star"; third chapter, 5th verse: "He that overcometh shall be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels"; 12th verse: "He that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go out thence no more; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem which cometh down out of the heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name"; 21st verse: "To him that overcometh I will give to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne."

Only by grouping all of these promises into one great sentence do we understand the riches of the heavenly reward to the faithful.

My next observation is that a calm survey of the imperfect conditions of the churches and pastors makes it seem impossible that such instrumentality can bring about the glorious results set forth in xi, 15—"The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." There are, however, two elements of hope in the picture: Christ is walking in the midst

of the churches, leading to repentance, and the Spirit is directing and enabling. I know the first time I very carefully studied the condition of the seven churches in Asia, and then applied the revelation to any seven churches around me, with their seven pastors, I found no perfect pastor and no perfect church. Every church had some fault or faults and every pastor had some weakness or faults. So I said in my heart: "How are preachers like these and churches like these to capture the world?" and I never got over that discouragement until I read the fourth and fifth chapters, when the heaven-scene of the "things that are" revealed the throne of grace with agencies and activities helping the churches and preachers on earth.

My next observation is: That the doctrine of this book of Revelation necessitates the perpetuity of the churches. The doctrine is just this: Christ will appoint no other instrumentality for the evangelization of the world; the world is to be lighted through these churches, and that when a candlestick is removed, another church is raised up, and that in every age of the world there will be some churches faithful to the Lord. That is the teaching of this book, and particularly do you find it when you come to that view of the church presented as an institution under the symbol of a woman, and the apostate church presented under the symbol of a woman. You will see the woman that represents the true church driven into the wilderness, where she is in hiding for a long time; just like Israel led out of Egypt wandered in the wilderness for thirty-eight years, and as historians would have a hard time tracing every day's steps of Israel in the wilderness, so a church historian now has a hard time in putting the surveyor's chain on the trace of the true churches in this wilderness period. There

is no difficulty in tracing the New Testament history. Nor is there any difficulty from the Reformation period to the present. It is easy to prove that there are now churches similar in faith, doctrine, ordinances, officers, and purposes to the New Testament churches. But there is a certain dark period in history that this book of Revelation will discuss, when the church is in the wilderness, and one time when the two witnesses—that is, the churches and the pastors—seemed to be dead; the two witnesses are slain, when the apostate church rejoices that there is no dissent in the world. But as you watch a little while you see these witnesses, both of them, rise up and go on with their testimony. If church historians would write their histories in view of the forecast given in the book of Revelation, they would be saved from many a foolish notion.

My next general observation is, that though a candlestick be removed—that is, a particular church organization be dissolved—that has no bearing on the preservation of the true Christians who are members of that church. Sardis, as a church organization, was declared to be "dead," but "thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments: and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." The church was blotted out, but "I will in no wise blot out their names from the book of life."

My last general observation is this: Since Christ has appointed these churches for the evangelization and illumination of the world, what is the law on the preacher or the member that destroys one of these churches? Paul answers that question for us. He says to the church at Corinth: "Ye are God's building, ye are the temple of God, and him that destroys the temple of God will I destroy." And I tell you that is a very

solemn thought for a preacher who so ministers that he destroys a church, or for any deacon, or board of deacons, who so act as to blot out a church of our Lord. The candlestick is indeed removed, but woe to him that causeth its removal. You would do a thousand times less harm to reach up and blot out the most brilliant planet in the sky than to blot out the feeblest little church here on earth which is trying to do good. Every pastor ought to bring this question up in his own heart: Is my ministry of this church building it or pulling it down; is it strengthening or destroying? What a solemn responsibility upon anybody who takes charge of a church. You may track some preachers by a trail of decayed, divided or dissolved churches. You may track some other preachers by a trail of growing, illuminating churches—every one they labour with prospers.

I put my hand on a man's shoulders, once, when he asked me to congratulate him on being called to a certain church. I said to him: "I will give you just six months to split it into shivers." He said, "What do you mean?" I said: "Is not that the result wherever, so far, you have preached? Go back over your ministry and name a church that you really built up." To my astonishment that man still thinks a great deal of me, and the last talk I had with him he promised that if he was ever a pastor again he would prove by his pastorate that he did not split things.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Locate on a map the province of Asia, the seven churches and the island of Patmos.
2. Show how the key-passage of the first revelation, i, 12-16, unlocks the meaning of the second revelation, chapters ii and iii.
3. Cite from Matthew and Revelation our Lord's own uses of the word church (Greek *Ekklesia*) and their bearing on some

modern misuses of the term "church," particularly "the church universal"—visible or invisible.

4. Gather up into one sentence all the titles of Christ in the second revelation, and explain each.

5. Show what the significance and effect of Christ "walking among the candlesticks."

6. Show that the symbolic description of Christ in the first and second revelation is that of a priest and king.

7. How is Christ present with the churches?

8. Show the diversity of the conditions of the churches, no two alike.

9. By application show a similar diversity now.

10. Are these real letters to seven contemporaneous churches, or a prophecy of seven successive periods of church history?

11. What adaptation do you find in Christ's variant titles, rebukes, threats and promises?

12. Gather up into one sentence the series of Christ's promises, and what does the grouping show?

13. Keeping the outcome in view—chapter xi, 15—what effect on the mind of the imperfect churches and pastors, what the two elements of hope, and where do we find encouragement greater than the discouragement?

14. What the necessary doctrine of the book on the perpetuity of the churches, and what the difficulty of the historical tracing of this perpetuity, illustrating by Old Testament analogue?

V

THE CONDITION OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA

Revelation II and III

I WILL begin this chapter with some additional general observations.

My first observation is that in each city of these seven churches there are three competing religions—heathen, Jewish, Christian. In every letter we see evidence of the conflict.

My second general observation refers to the meaning of the term "angel"—each letter commences: "to the angel." Some people have wrongly supposed that each church has a guardian angel. They fail to tell us how these guardian angels communicated these messages to the churches. There are quite a number of Greek words like "apostle," "deacon," "angel," that have both an etymological meaning and an official meaning. Officially, the term "angel" refers to these messengers from God—from the upper world—but the word means messengers or representatives, and in this book—particularly in the cases of the angel in the churches—it means pastor who is the representative of the church. If I were to write a letter to the church at Austin, I would direct it to the pastor of the church, and through him as the representative it would be communicated to the church.

My third general observation relates to the doctrine

of Balaam, to which reference is made in the letters to two or three of the churches. You will remember the analogue in the Old Testament where Balaam was called upon to prophesy against Israel, by Balak, the king of the Moabites, and God would not let him prophesy any evil, but he coveted the big pay that Balak offered him, and later suggested how Israel could be destroyed—by bringing about their alienation from God, telling Balak to introduce to the Israelites the most beautiful of the Moabitish women, and let them seduce the Israelites to partake of the festivals of the heathen religion as well as of the Jewish religion, and this open communion with the heathen religion resulted in the worst form of immorality and idolatry that brought about the alienation between Israel and Jehovah. Now there were men and women living in these churches, or in these cities, who taught that doctrine. They preached open communion between the Christian religion and the heathen religion: "You come to my festival and I will go to your festival; I will partake of your Lord's Supper with you if you will partake of the heathen feast with me." Paul had already said: "You cannot partake of the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; you cannot eat at the table of the Lord and at the table of devils." That was the teaching of Balaam as found in these churches—and very hurtful to several of them, as you will see in the exposition.

My next general observation relates to the meaning of Nicolaitans, at least twice referred to in our letters to the churches. Some people suppose that Nicholas, who was ordained one of the seven deacons in the Jerusalem church, mentioned in Acts vi, afterward founded the doctrine here referred to, and hence those who adopted the doctrine were called "Nicolaitans."

There is no particle of evidence to connect Nicholas in Acts vi with these Nicolaitans. There was a Nicholas, doubtless, who did teach the doctrine that is here mentioned, but what you want to know is not who started the doctrine, but what was the doctrine. It was a form of Antinomianism: If election be true, and you are saved by Christ and not by works, then it does not make any difference what sin you commit; you are all right. I have seen in Texas a preacher who was a Nicolaitan, who boldly taught in private that immorality committed by a Christian cannot possibly result in any harm to him, and based his seduction to evil upon that theory. But it is the doctrine of the devil, no matter if it be a preacher who holds it, or somebody else.

My next general observation is to show Paul's connection with these seven churches of Asia. All of them were established either directly or indirectly by Paul. You will find the history in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, where he held his great meeting at Ephesus, in which all of the province of Asia heard the word of God. The next part of the history is in the twentieth chapter of the Acts, where Paul delivers his memorable address to the Elders of the church at Ephesus. Then, during his first Roman imprisonment, he wrote to churches in this section concerning the Gnostic philosophy. These letters are to the Colossians and the Ephesians. Then to Philemon, who lived in this section, he wrote concerning Christianity's attitude toward slavery. Then, still in the first Roman imprisonment, he wrote to its Christian Jews—the letter to the Hebrews. After he escaped from that Roman imprisonment he wrote the first letter to Timothy, who had charge under Paul's direction of the church at Ephesus, and when the second time he was imprisoned at Rome and had been con-

demned to death he wrote the second letter to Timothy, still at Ephesus. So that up to A.D. 68, when Paul was martyred, all of these churches were under his apostolic jurisdiction.

My next general observation is to show John's connection with these seven churches. You may see from uniform tradition that John moved to Ephesus as a last surviving apostle and had charge of all these churches at least by A.D. 80. While living at Ephesus he wrote his three letters, which we have considered. One of the Fathers, Clement of Alexandria, expressly says that after the death of Domitian, John escaped from exile in Patmos, and returned to the city of Ephesus.

Now we are ready to take up the churches in the order of their condition:

First Ephesus: this city was the metropolis of proconsular Asia, one of the greatest cities of ancient times, having in it one of the seven wonders of the world—the temple of Diana, whose religion, however, was not so much a Greek religion as Oriental, since the Diana of the Ephesians was represented by a wooden idol, a monstrous image that set forth the fruitfulness of nature —a very different Diana from the Diana of the Greeks.

"To the angel of the church at Ephesus." Who was he? Some claim that Timothy was the pastor at the time that John wrote this letter. There is no evidence of it, and it is very highly improbable from the fact that Timothy was not a pastor at all, but an evangelist, an apostolic delegate, and even in the second letter to him Paul is calling him from Ephesus to come to Rome. It is not at all probable that Timothy remained at Ephesus as pastor from A.D. 68 to 96, when this book was written. So we will say we do not know who this pastor was at Ephesus.

What things were commended in this letter to the church at Ephesus? If I was teaching the book of Revelation to a class in Greek, I would have much to say of the shades of meaning in the words employed. But confining myself to the English, I will say that the things commended are: "Thy works, thy toil of service, thy adherence to sound doctrine and the motive that prompted the work." All was done for Christ's sake. Another thing commended was the attitude of this church to false prophets. "Thou hast tried them that say they are apostles and are not"—and just here we find an overwhelming argument in favour of the late date of the book of Revelation. If you turn to John's first letter, which he wrote from Ephesus, the fourth chapter and 1st verse, which letter was written between A.D. 82 and 85, he gives his commandment to try the spirits, whether they be of God. Now, later, he says that Ephesus had obeyed that injunction: "Ye have tried them that say they are prophets, or apostles, and are not, and condemned them." We will find one of the seven churches that did not try them—I will tell you which one when we come to it.

The attitude of that church to the Nicolaitan doctrine we have just discussed is also commended: "Thou hatest the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which also *I* hate." So these are the things commended in that church.

The thing reprobated was just one thing: "Thou hast left thy first love." That means: "You do not now possess that fervour of love which filled your hearts when you professed to be Christians, when you were first converted." Whoever has abated in the love that he had in his heart when God converted him, that one needs a revival. That is a condition of the Ephesus church. Sound in doctrine, sound in discipline, but they had not the love which characterized their conversion.

How would that affect you, brothers and sisters? It hits me sometimes—not all the time. I can never forget the love in my heart for God and man when God converted me. At times it has abated, but characteristically it remains with me, and many a time has even gone beyond what it was when I was first converted.

Let us look, then, at the exhortation to this church: "Repent and do thy first works"—that is to say, in the spirit of the love as you did at first. The threat: "If you do not, I will come and remove thy candlestick." We do know that the Ephesus candlestick was removed.

The church at Smyrna: Smyrna for more than two thousand years had been a city—it is a city now, as it has now a population of about 200,000, and three-fourths of the population to-day are nominally Christians: whether Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics or Protestants. It is the seat of great commerce, situated as it is with such a splendid harbour on the Ægean Sea.

"And to the angel of the church at Smyrna"—who was that angel? I can tell you this time. In A.D. 168 a pastor of that church, Polycarp, was martyred under the rule of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor. As he was about to be executed he said to the proconsul who governed the province: "I have been a Christian eighty-six years." Subtract 86 from 168, and you find that he was converted in A.D. 82. Now we know that he was a pastor in A.D. 108, for Ignatius in his writings says he visited Polycarp, the pastor at Smyrna, that year. Tertullian, Ireneus, Eusebius, all say that Polycarp was made pastor at Smyrna under the administration of the apostle John, and if he was converted in A.D. 82 he would have been a Christian fourteen years when this letter was written. That is time enough for him to become pastor of the church. He was one of John's own converts.

John went to Asia about A.D. 80, and in A.D. 82 Polycarp was converted, and when he became a preacher he was installed as pastor of the church at Smyrna.

Now, what things are commended here? "I know thy tribulations and thy poverty, but thou art rich"—while in this world's goods the members of the church were poor, in spiritual things they were rich. We will find, when we come to Laodicea, the exact reverse: they were rich in this world's goods, but in the sight of God they were miserable, poor, blind and naked.

We notice in this letter to the church at Smyrna the attitude of the Jewish religion to Christianity—"the synagogue of Satan"—those who say they are Jews and are not. That is, they claim to be Jews on account of fleshly descent from Abraham, but they are not the spiritual descendants of Abraham. So that the Jewish church existed there as the bitterest enemy of the Christian church. They are the people who accused Polycarp in A.D. 168, they brought the wood to burn him at the stake, and helped to pile the fagots on the fire as he was burning. You will notice that it makes no difference as to the mere form of organization, whether Christian or Jewish, it is the devil who is the real author of the evil, and hence it says here that "Satan shall cast many of you into prison." Satan can work just as well, or maybe a little better, through one who claims to be religious and is not, than through an outsider.

There is no censure on the church at Smyrna. There is an exhortation to be faithful unto death. "They will put you to death, but I will give you the crown of life." As it is expressed in Christ's address to the apostles: "Fear not them who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," and though they kill you in

the body, which is the first death, I assure you you will not be hurt by the second death.

Pergamos: This is a city, at the present time, of about 30,000 inhabitants. One-tenth of them are professing Christians, either Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics or Protestants of some kind. The heathen religion in this city was the dominant force of evil, the patron deity was the demigod Esculapius,—that is, the physician god,—but there were also temples in the city to Jupiter, Minerva, Apollo, Venus and Bacchus. Hence "I know where thou dwellest, where Satan's throne is"—that is to say, the heathen religion in the city of Pergamos was the religion of state, and enforced tests of allegiance on pain of death.

What is commended here? That they hold fast, notwithstanding the persecuting test, and do not deny Jesus Christ. Particularly was that so in the case of their illustrious pastor, Antipas, who is mentioned here. When the heathen authority demanded of him that he turn loose Christianity and avow the heathen religion, he held fast and did not deny, and suffered death.

What is reprobated in this church? That it did not exercise gospel discipline; they retained in their members Balaamites and Nicolaitans. I doubt not that it was fear that prompted many of them, after the pastor was put to death, to say this: "I will submit to the government test, at least have open communion with the heathen; I will partake of their feasts and the things sacrificed to the idols." Some of them were following the doctrine of Nicholas, saying: "If you are a Christian it doesn't make any difference what you do." The exhortation calls on them to repent, or else judgment from the sword that issues from the mouth of Jesus Christ shall come upon them.

The next church is Thyatira. This inland church is commended for the following things: Love, faith, service, patience, and unlike the church at Ephesus, its last works were better than its first. In Ephesus the first works were the best, and the last works not up to the mark on account of having lost their love.

What things are reprobated? They had not exercised discipline: "Thou hast that woman Jezebel, who claims to be a prophet." That demand in John's first letter and 4th verse to try them that say they are prophets and apostles was disregarded. In this case great trouble came to the church from a woman. When a woman is good she is better than a man, but when she is bad she is worse than a man. The woman has much to do with Christianity; they are for or against it, and the man who does not recognize the might of woman's influence is blind. That is why I rejoice to co-operate in every good work which the women undertake. I wish to assure you that Lydia, who is mentioned in the sixteenth chapter of Acts, as being a woman of Thyatira, is not the Jezebel who is mentioned here; it is a slander on Lydia. It is every way improbable that Lydia of A.D. 52 is the Jezebel of A.D. 96. I am more inclined to think she was the wife of the pastor. I do not know who the pastor was. You pastors, your wives will be mighty where you work—mighty for good or mighty for evil. Anyhow, this Jezebel claimed be a prophetess, and that this prophetic spirit told her that open communion with heathenism had no harm in it. Now comes the great text for the preacher: "I gave her the space to repent, and she repented not." As a young preacher, in every revival meeting I preached on "the space to repent," emphasizing the fact that beyond that allotted time there was no hope of salvation. This woman crossed the bound-

ary line, she sinned against the Holy Spirit and her sin, therefore, had never forgiveness, either in this world or in the next. There is such a boundary line and then no more space for repentance.

There is reference in this letter to "the depths of Satan." It is a little difficult to translate the Greek so as to convey the right idea. It is quite probable that this is the thought: The Gnostic philosophers claimed that they had a new knowledge, later and better than any revelation, as if to say: "You know what Paul says, and you know what John said, but we have the depths of a later and better knowledge." Our Lord admits the depths, but declares them "the depths of Satan."

Sardis: This city is the capital of Crœsus, said to be the richest man in the world in his day. You read how Cyrus captured him and destroyed his empire. Sardis, his capital, was always a city of great wealth. There is no commendation in this letter, except toward the last he says: "There are a few in Sardis"—not many—"who have not defiled their garments," but the church was absorbed in the acquisition of wealth and swallowed up in worldly-mindedness. It is distinctly stated: "None of thy works are perfect." We have found heretofore something exceptionally good to commend—especially in the case of Smyrna. But the church at Sardis had no excellence in any direction, whether in growth, fellowship or mission work: "None of thy works are perfect," hence the exhortation to repent is accompanied by this sharp threat: "Repent, or I will come like a thief in the night and visit you with my judgment." This is a coming of the Lord, but not His final advent. It is like that coming in His other great prophecy, concerning the evil servant who said in his heart, "My lord tarrieth," and began to beat his fellow-servants and to eat and drink

with drunken, to whom in an unsuspected hour the lord came, cut him asunder and appointed a portion with hypocrites (Matthew xxiv, 48-51); or like the rich fool who heard the summons: "This night shall thy soul be required of thee."

The sixth church is Philadelphia. This was the smallest and weakest, and apparently the most insignificant of the churches. Philadelphia was only a village situated on the top of a volcanic range of mountains; earthquakes destroyed the place two or three times. There is no reproof of this church—all is commendation. An open door is set before it. The persecuting Jews were to fall down before it and know that the Lord loved it. There is a sweeping promise: "I will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world to try them." It is difficult, in the light of subsequent history, to define precisely this "hour of trial." It may refer in part to the great apostasy mentioned by Paul (II Thessalonians ii, 3-4) which developed into the Roman hierarchy discussed in this book (Chapter XVII). Or in part to the rise of Mahometism, A.D. 600, and which by A.D. 1392 had conquered all the territory in which these churches were located. At any rate, Dr. Justin A. Smith, at this point, quotes from the infidel historian, Edward Gibbon, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," referring to this Turkish conquest: "in the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the Revelation; the desolation is complete, and the Temple of Diana or the church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveller. The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the god of Mahomet, without a rival or a son, is invoked

in the Mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos, and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or by courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the Emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in the scene of ruins—a pleasing example that the paths of honour and safety may sometimes be the same." So this church survived at least thirteen hundred years, long after the other six had passed away. Indeed, the "pillar" to which Gibbon refers still stands, as if to accentuate the promise in verse 12, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God"—what a glorious thing for that weak church. Paul once wrote about Ephesus: "I will tarry at Ephesus until the Pentecost, for a great door is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries," but the Ephesus door had been shut a long time with the Philadelphia door still open. There on the mountain-top the faithful pastor and the faithful little village church were leading the people to Christ. The "open door" connects suitably with the words of our Lord in the first revelation: "I have the keys of death and Hades," and with the beginning of this letter: "I have the key of David."

We may also compare Matthew xvi, 19, "I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." But the "keys" of the three passages are not the same; the ideas are different:

1. *The keys of the Kingdom* mean apostolic or church authority to declare the terms of entrance into or rejection from the Kingdom of Heaven, illustrated by the latter

clause of Matthew xvi, 19; xviii, 18; John xx, 23; Acts ii, 38; v, 9; viii, 20-23; x, 43; xvi, 30-31.

2. *The keys of death and Hades* mean Christ's authority over the death of the body and to open the state or place of disembodied souls. As when He says: "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church," i.e., the death of disciples, sending their souls into the spirit-world, shall never so prevail as to leave no surviving church on earth. Or when it is said: "Thou wilt not abandon my soul unto Hades" (Acts ii, 27), i.e., my soul will not continue disembodied, for my body will be raised (Acts ii, 31). The same authority over the dead would not permit Lazarus to return to the earth to warn the brothers of the rich man, nor permit the prayers of the lost rich man to relieve his own condition, nor to intervene for his kindred on earth (Luke xvi, 23-31). This authority exempted Enoch and Elijah from death as it will exempt living Christians at His final advent (I Corinthians xv, 55-56), brings back with Him the souls of the saints in heaven when He returns (I Thessalonians iv, 14), and causes both the grave to give up its dead bodies and Hades to give up its disembodied souls at the judgment (Revelation xx, 13).

3. *The key of David* means Christ's authority to confer great opportunities for saving men, as here in our passage, and in I Corinthians xvi, 8-9, i.e., of admitting them to the saving presence of the Lord. Compare Isaiah xxii, 22.

The seventh church is Laodicea. Smyrna was hot—it flamed like fire in its zeal; its fidelity unto death glowed like an oven. Sardis got as cold as ice. But Laodicea was lukewarm, neither cold nor hot—it did not come out strong and openly for anything. It was like the man in the canoe who had lost his paddle in the stream, and

prayed: "Good Lord, help me—Good devil, help me." That is the weakest of all characters, and when the strong expression is here used: "I will spew thee out of my mouth," it is designed to show that this condition is nauseating to the Lord Jesus Christ. That was the Laodicean condition. And strange to say, they thought they were rich and needed nothing; whereas, as God saw them, they were miserable and poor and blind and naked.

I have heard Laodicean letters read at associations: "Dear Brethren: This year's letter reports to you that we are at peace. Baptized—none; received by letter—none; excluded—none; restored—none; given to missions—nothing." That is the peace of death. I again wish to repeat that in no age of the world have all of the churches been like Ephesus, or Smyrna, or Pergamos, or Thyatira, or Sardis, or Philadelphia, or Laodicea. And in every period of history there have been churches like all these types. What if next Sunday the Recording Angel should come down and write on the board of every church in Fort Worth some one of these seven names: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia or Laodicea? Some of the brethren would stand out and read the inscription, and their knees would shake like Belshazzar's when the handwriting of the Lord appeared on the wall.

We cannot in these chapters go into all the details of criticism like a commentary—the salient points must suffice. But one verse concerning Laodicea must be noticed somewhat: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." It is a mistake to preach a sermon to sinners from this text. It is addressed exlusively to delinquent church members. In walking among the candlesticks

our Lord knocks at the hearts of backslidden or hypocritical members, demanding admission and promising spiritual intercommunion to those who admit Him. In this way He often rings the spiritual door-bell at the houses of professing Christians whose ears are quick to hear the calls of fashion, pleasure, ambition or business, but so stopped as never to hear the ringing of Him who comes often and patiently stands and keeps ringing. Sometimes He rings by sickness, sometimes by financial loss, sometimes by death in the house. The sickness, loss or death are realized, but they do not recognize them as the calling of the Lord.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What three competing religions in proconsular Asia?
2. Meaning of the angel of the church?
3. What the original doctrine of Balaam, and what its application to the Asian churches?
4. What the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and was the Nicholas of Acts vi the founder?
5. What the Bible material showing Paul's connection with the seven churches?
6. What John's connection?

Ephesus

7. Tell of this city and its religion.
8. Was Timothy the angel of this church—giving reasons for your answer?
9. What the condition of this church—good or bad?
10. What strong evidence here of late date for the book?

Smyrna

11. Tell of this city—past and present.
12. Who probably angel of the church, giving argument?
13. Its condition, and with what church contrasted?
14. What the hostility of Jews to Christianity here and how evident?
15. Who the real author of persecution?

PERGAMOS

16. Tell of this city, its library and heathen religion.
17. What the meaning of "Throne of Satan"?
18. The things commended and reprobated?

THYATIRA

19. Wherein the conditions here contrasted with Ephesus?
20. What the chief cause of trouble here?
21. What evidence that this Jezebel was the Lydia of Acts xvi?
22. In the Old Testament analogue what the magnitude of the trouble caused by Jezebel?
23. What the influence of woman on Christianity—good or bad?
24. Show what Christian women workers are doing to-day.
25. What great text for revival sermon in this section and its doctrine?
26. Meaning of "depths of Satan"?

SARDIS

27. Tell of history of this city and its characteristics.
28. What the condition of the church and only commendation?
29. Explain the coming of the Lord in this account, and cite similar cases.

PHILADELPHIA

30. Tell of the city and relative position of the church.
31. Probable meaning of the "hour of trial on the whole world"?
32. Cite Gibbon's testimony to the power of our Lord's promise to keep this church.
33. With what scripture does the "open door" connect?
34. Explain, in order, the three key-passages cited in chapter, and illustrate by other scriptures.

LAODICEA

35. What the condition of this church in its own sight and God's?
36. What one word expresses their condition and what strong term expresses our Lord's nausea at the condition?
37. What text here is misapplied to sinners, and explain it.

VI

THE PROMISES TO THE FAITHFUL IN THE CHURCHES

Revelation II, 7, 11, 17, 26-28; III, 5, 12, 21

LET us recall again that the Lord adapts His titles, exhortations, threats and promises to the varied conditions of the churches. In no two cases are they alike.

This chapter is devoted to the promises. All these promises are connected with one word "overcometh"—Greek "nikao." The details of these promises are given in seven distinguishing series in the second and third chapters, and the sum of them expressed in xxi, 7, "He that overcometh shall inherit *all* things"—or better, "These things," referring back to the things enumerated in xxi, 1-6.

Let us group into one sentence all the detailed and distinguishing promises of the seven series: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God"—and "He shall not be hurt of the second death"—and "I will give to him the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it"—and "I will give him authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father: and I will

give him the morning star"—and "he shall be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels"—and "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and mine own new name"—and "I will give to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne" (see ii, 7, 11, 17, 26-28; iii, 5, 12, 21).

General Remarks on the Promises.

1. They are all clothed in the most sublime imagery.

2. Their character, multitude and magnitude are overwhelming, outshining any galaxy in the natural skies. The mind is dazzled by their blended brilliance. The hand of apprehension looses its grip in trying to grasp them and comprehension must wait for understanding until the realization of post-judgment experience.

3. Yet even now unstaggering Faith receives them, and Hope lives in their radiance. They reverse gravitation because they draw upward; they pull toward heaven and uplift. They stimulate more than wine until one is intoxicated with the Spirit. They awaken desire, develop strength and inspire zeal.

4. Laying aside all dogmatism, comparing scripture with scripture, in exceeding humility, praying fervently for spiritual guidance, let us attempt an interpretation.

Inasmuch as all these promises are to him that "*overcometh,*" our first concern is to know the meaning and

sweep of this word, and just what or whom must be overcome, and with what means we may overcome.

Evidently the word "overcometh" is not limited to one definite transaction, but has a continuous meaning—a sweep beyond a single event. What are its terminals? When does the overcoming commence and where does it end? It commences with justification and ends at the death of the body with complete sanctification of the soul. "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved"—"Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt receive a crown of life." John elsewhere supplies the object of the verb. Twice he says: "Ye have overcome *the wicked one*" (I John ii, 13, 14). Three times he declares *the world* as the object to be overcome (I John v, 4, 5). Only those "born of God overcome the world."

The *means* of overcoming is "the blood of the Lamb"; the instrumentality is *faith*—"and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (I John v, 4). Satan, his emissaries and the world that lieth in him, must be overcome. By faith the child of God goes on from victory to victory—from grace to grace—from strength to strength—from glory to glory.

Let us now look separately at the promises themselves:

1. *Access to the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God.* Here, evidently, there is allusion to the Genesis story. The purpose of the tree of life in the original garden was to eliminate the mortality of the body. So that, in unfigurative terms, this promise is the glorification of the body to be experienced without death by all Christians living when our Lord comes, and by all Christians who have died, after their resurrection. We may count the glorification of the bodies of the two classes as practically simultaneous, since the righteous dead are raised before

the righteous living are changed, and together they are caught up to the Lord (I Thessalonians iv, 13-18).

The promise means everything set forth in Paul's words (I Corinthians xv, 42-49, 51-58): incorruption, glory, power, a spiritual body in the image of the Second Adam; or in his other words, "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be like to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (Philippians iii, 21). Or as John elsewhere puts it: "We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him" (I John iii, 2). Hence the Psalmist: "I shall be satisfied *when I awake with thy likeness.*" This title to access to the tree of life arises from cleansing by the blood of the Lamb, effected in us when in regeneration and sanctification the Spirit applies the blood. See later reference in this book: vii, 14; xxii, 14. After Adam's fall he was expelled from the garden lest he eat of this fruit and live forever in a body of sin (Genesis iii, 22), but a throne of grace and mercy was established at the east of the garden where the sword-flame, or Shekinah, dwelt between the Cherubim to keep open the way to the tree of life through vicarious sacrifices (Genesis iii, 24; iv, 4; Hebrews xi, 4).

2. "*Shall not be hurt of the second death.*" The meaning of the second death is the casting of both soul and risen body into the lake of fire (Revelation xx, 14, 15). It is the final decision of our Lord at the general judgment, and fixes forever the status of the lost. The lake of fire is a metaphor, of course, but expresses a reality not less fearful than the figure. Into this torment the soul of a lost sinner goes immediately after the death of the body—see the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Luke xvi. But from this disembodied state of torment the soul is called to the general judgment, where it is

united to its risen body—"Death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them" (Revelation xx, 13), i.e., the body came from the grave and the soul from its place in torment. Then on the sentence of the Judge the lost man, soul and body, is cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

While both memory and conscience will afflict the lost forever, the lake of fire is *punitive,* and not the remorse of conscience, which is only consequential. That this final sentence is *punitive* appears from Matthew xxv, 41, 46, and II Thessalonians i, 7-9. It is further described by our Lord as a destruction of soul and body in Gehenna, and directly contrasted with the first death, or the death of the body: "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Greek *Gehenna*).

This promise was specially precious to the church at Smyrna, at that time undergoing persecution unto death. The devil, through his agents, might kill their bodies, the first death, but these martyrs should not be hurt of the second death.

3. *"I will give to him the hidden manna."* The "hidden manna" is an allusion to the memorial pot of manna hidden in the ark of the covenant. This represented Christ as the bread of life, sent from heaven—see the great discussion, John vi, 27-59. Whosoever by faith appropriates the body and blood of Christ has eaten food which nourishes unto eternal life. An eater of the manna in the desert did not escape death, but the believer in Jesus Christ, antitype of the memorial manna hidden in the ark of the covenant, shall never die.

This promise is on a line with the preceding one, and particularly appropriate to Pergamos, whose heretics were

eating the meat offered to idols, following Balaam, which was a food unto death, but whose faithful ones are promised the bread of life.

4. "*I will give him a white stone* and on the stone a new name written which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it."

Observe that this is the second promise to the church at Pergamos. To the same person is given both "the hidden manna" and "the stone," whose inscription is *hidden* to all but the recipient. There appears to be a connection of thought between the two promises which may be helpful toward an interpretation of the white stone. Let us follow up this clue.

Satan's throne was at Pergamos. That is, he completely dominated the municipal government. This was a Greek city, subject to Greek method of judicial procedure. A test of loyalty to the government would be a participation in the idolatrous feasts. We know from Paul's letter to the Greek city of Corinth that a Christian might not eat at both the Lord's table and the devil's table, nor drink of both the Lord's cup and the cup of devils. So refraining from the heathen idol feasts was a test of loyalty to Christ. And so the same Satan who inspired Balaam to spring this test on the Israelites inspired the later Balaamites to compromise on this open communion between the two religions, and inspires the municipal government to demand like compromises of the other members of the church. Fear may have prompted the tempted to this compromise, and fear may have inspired the church to refrain from disciplining the heretical and immoral members, especially after their pastor, Antipas, was murdered for his fidelity.

A Greek city expressed judgment on persons arraigned by a kind of ballot, using shells as at Athens, or pebbles

here whose significance declared for acquittal or condemnation—white for acquittal or black for guilty. Following this line of thought the promise would mean: If the devil-prompted city condemns your loyalty to Christ by a ballot of black pebbles, He will acquit you by the white stone of justification. This view gathers force from the title of our Lord when addressing the church: "These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword." In the vision, i, 16, this sword issues from His mouth, and hence represents His word of judgment. It is a judge symbol (Hebrews iv, 12, 13). Moreover, the inscription on the white stone can be made to harmonize with this interpretation. It is a "new name" unknown to the heathen judges, but well known to the recipient. If this be our Lord's own *new name* as later revealed in the book (Revelation xix, 12, 13, 16) it is intensely significant in the connection: "Word of God," "King of kings and Lord of lords," i.e., the earthly judgment condemns, the divine judgment acquits, the condemnation is from earthly lords—the justification from the Lord of lords. The expression "known only to him who receives it" means the assurance of divine acceptance, the witness of the Spirit, bearing witness with his own spirit, which, being entirely a matter of personal experience, cannot be known to any one except the recipient.

5. *"And I will give him authority over nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter are broken into shivers."*

More than any one of the other promises does this one need careful exposition. Its misinterpretation has been productive of monstrous evils in the Christian centuries, and the end is not yet. It is quoted to support the Romanist pretension that all nations are under the

absolute jurisdiction of the Papal hierarchy, in the exercise of which continents have been bestowed upon favourite monarchs, kings have been dethroned, subjects absolved from allegiance, crusades preached, property confiscated, cruel persecutions waged, marriages annulled, family ties dissolved. The record of these evils constitutes the bloodiest volumes in the annals of time. Nor has its misuse been limited to the Romanists. The evils are not less evil when flowing from Protestant or Greek Catholic misapplication. They have prevailed whenever and wherever religious sectaries of any name have usurped control over states. "The mad men of Munster," the Cameronians of Scotland, the Fifth Monarchy men of Cromwell's day, the Muggletonians and Mormons of this country, all belong to the same category.

In order to correct interpretation we must first understand the terms employed and their Biblical usage.

(a) First of all, the promise, whatever it means, is not to any religious denomination or ecclesiastical organization, but only to the individual Christian who *overcomes:* "To him that overcometh I will give"—it is not a grant of power to any one of the seven churches, nor to all of them combined. This is a capital, fundamental, crucial, vital fact, essential to correct interpretation.

(b) The promise is not "power"—Greek "dunamis,"—but "authority"—Greek "exousia."

(c) The verb "shall rule" is not "basileuo," but "poimaino," which means "to shepherd"—"he shall shepherd them."

(d) "The rod of iron," Greek "rabdos"—rod of correction—is the shepherd's rod, iron-tipped at one end, and with a crook at the other end. See the Septuagint for the Shepherd Psalm: "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The shepherd does not carry two things,

one a rod, and the other a staff, but the same thing is either rod or staff according to its use. See the author's sermon on Psalms xxiii, 4.

(e) The "breaking into shivers as a potter's vessel," is not necessarily for ultimate destruction, but may look to reconstruction (see Jeremiah xviii, 4-10). It becomes destructive only when impenitence becomes incorrigible (Jeremiah xix, 1-11), and even then applies not to all the nation but only to its hostile elements. In other words, we miss the mark if we construe all this rule as *punitive*. The primary intent looks to correction and salvation; as the shepherd goads the wandering sheep with the iron-tipped end of his staff into a safer path, or draws him back from a precipice with the crook at the other end, or sets up the staff as an ensign for rallying the flock together in time of danger, or with it counts them each morning and evening as they, one by one, "pass under the rod" in leaving the fold for pasturage or returning to it for shelter, or in using it as a weapon of offence against the enemies of the flock.

(f) This rule, or shepherding, so far as exercised mediately *in time* by him that overcometh, is not executive, but instructive and declarative. When God, in time, "hews a nation by a prophet," the prophet simply declares, but does not execute the divine threat. As Jonah was sent, not to overturn Nineveh, but merely to declare "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." And the case of Nineveh will show the merciful intent of Jeremiah's illustration of the potter's vessel: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation or kingdom to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy it, if that nation concerning which I have spoken turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them" (Jeremiah xix, 7-10).

The overcoming Christian, like the ancient prophet, is God's mouthpiece to the nations: "Behold! I have put my words into thy mouth: see this day I have put thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy, and to overthrow, to build and to plant." (Jeremiah i, 9, 10.)

Even in the prototype of our passage (Psalms ii, 8-12), where the nations are given to our ascended Lord for an inheritance, and where it is said: "Thou shalt break them with an iron rod, and shalt dash them into pieces as a potter's vessel," the verses which follow show the merciful and instructive intent of the threat. Which passage naturally leads to our last thought in this connection:

The authority promised is derivative and limited, and not inherent and absolute, and arises from the overcoming Christian's unity with Christ and his representative function of acting mediately for Christ. This is evident from the modifying clause: "even as I have received from my Father."

Here it is quite important to understand the meritorious ground of Christ's own authority, how received and to what end, since what He received is that which He imparts and certainly to the same end, and which so imparted must be exercised as He Himself used it. The authority in question does not arise from His Sonship in eternity, but from His Sonship in the flesh. It is expressly said to be derived from the voluntary humiliation and vicarious expiation of sin in the flesh. See particularly Philippians ii, 6-11. Hence, historically, He was invested with universal sovereignty after His resurrection. The author insists that you carefully study this proof: Daniel vii, 13-14; Psalms ii, 1-12; cx, 1; Acts ii, 33-36; iv, 25-27; Revelation v, 12-14. In times antecedent to His actual historical sacrifice for sin, when

sin is remitted to a penitent believer or rule exercised over a nation, it is by anticipation of that sacrifice, God accepting His promise to die for man as if already it had been done, so that as this book later puts it: "A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

In His exalted and glorified humanity He was made "head over all things to his church." It is to this He refers as the predicate of His great commission: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me. Go ye, therefore, disciple all the nations" (Matthew xxviii, 18). And from this passage we gather both the method and the end of "shepherding the nations." The method is not a carnal one, by fire and sword, as rule is enforced by worldly kingdoms, but spiritual. The primary end is not destruction, but salvation. The exercise of this authority, whether by Himself *directly,* or *mediately* through His people, is to promote the interest of His spiritual kingdom. Hence the proximate result of its exercise is expressed in Daniel ii, 44; Psalms lxxii, 5-17; Revelation xi, 15, and its ultimate result in Revelation xxi, 23-27. The capital error of the Jews throughout the ages has been an expectation of a Messiah who would in a literal earthly sense occupy the throne of David in Jerusalem and dominate the world. This idea, which He repudiated so emphatically at His first advent, He will not adopt at His final advent. The pre-millennial contention to the contrary is the most notorious anti-climax in all the vagaries of interpretation.

6. *"And I will give him the morning star."* This is the second promise to the faithful in Thyatira. The meaning of this symbolism is obvious. As the morning star is the herald of the coming day, so to the faithful our Lord will give a premonition of the final glorious triumph. This, of course, is the inward assurance by

the Spirit realized in personal experience, just as the white stone symbol of acquittal bears an inscription equal to internal assurance, known only to the recipient. As Peter expresses it, we have the surer word of prophecy shining as a lamp in the night: "until the day star arise in your hearts." Paul (I Thessalonians v, 3, 4) declares that in the day of our Lord, which comes as a thief in the night, the destruction of the wicked is sudden, and adds by way of contrast: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." There is no question that the final advent of our Lord to raise the dead and judge the world will be personal, visible, audible, palpable, and that this advent is *the great event* of the future, as His first advent was until His incarnation. Nor is it questioned that this book, as others of the New Testament, clearly discusses it. But it is equally clear, in this and other New Testament books, that signal time-events, as the coming of the Spirit, and particularly great judgments—as the destruction of Jerusalem, or the removal of a candlestick, or death to an individual, are called "a coming of the Lord." In this sense He is always coming. He is only a tyro in Biblical interpretation who insists that every Scriptural reference to a coming of the Lord must be construed as an allusion to His final advent. The promise of the gift of the "morning star" applies as much to these time-comings as to His final advent, e.g., He gave to His elect a premonitory sign which enabled them to escape the wrath of His coming in the destruction of Jerusalem.

7. *"He shall be arrayed in white garments."* This is the first promise to the overcoming few in Sardis who "had not defiled their garments." In order to a correct interpretation of this passage we must collate it with the

following correlative passages: The "wedding garment" of Matthew xxii, 12; the "white robe" conferred on the souls of the martyrs, Revelation vii, 9, 13, 14; the fine linen or wedding garment of the Bride at the marriage of the Lamb, Revelation xix, 7, 8; and the "washed robes" that entitle to the tree of life, Revelation xxii, 14.

Once in my early ministry, before preaching a sermon on the "Wedding Garment" of Matthew xxii, 12, I read Dr. Broadus' comment on the passage interpreting the wedding garment to mean righteousness in character and life, adding: "But to bring in the Pauline conception of imputed righteousness, and understand the parable to teach that, we must put on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, is altogether out of place." Then, I read Dr. Gill's comment, taking the opposite position, insisting that we must interpret the wedding garment to mean the imputed righteousness of Christ. Whereupon a lawyer of my congregation whispered to another lawyer: "When Broadus points one way and Gill another way this darkey is gwine to take to the woods." The other replied: "Before taking to the woods, let's hear the pastor."

So I say now, before taking to the woods on this promise, hear the author, for there is a middle road agreeing in part with both Broadus and Gill, and following neither altogether. Both are right in interpreting the wedding garment to mean righteousness, or holiness, rather, but this holiness is not limited, as Gill would have it, to justification, nor to character and life as Broadus has it. But Dr. Broadus is nearer right than Gill in this that the wedding garment righteousness refers not at all to the salvation done *for us*—that is to say, in its legal aspects as accomplished by redemption, justification and adoption—but altogether to the salvation wrought

in us by both regeneration and sanctification. Every redeemed, justified and adopted man is at the same time internally cleansed from the defilement of sin by the Spirit's application of Christ's blood. This is the first and an essential part of regeneration. Regeneration consists of (1) cleansing from the defilement of sin by the Spirit's application of the blood of Christ, and (2) of *renewing*. Both of these integral parts of regeneration come at justification. Then the work of *internal cleansing*, begun in regeneration, is carried on through sanctification, which is completed at the death of the body, so that of these disembodied saints we may say with Hebrews xii, 23, "The spirits of just men (justified) made perfect," or with Revelation vi, 11, "And there was given them to each one a white robe"—i.e., to the soul of each martyr underneath the altar, as revealed at the opening of the fifth seal.

The cleansing part of regeneration was typified by the sprinkling with a bunch of hyssop, of the liquefied ashes of the red heifer, or water of purification (Ezekiel xxxvi, 25; Hebrews ix, 13, 14). This is "the washing of regeneration" in Titus iii, 5, referred to also in I Corinthians vi, 11, "Such were some of you, but ye were washed." And, if you are able to bear it, this is the "born of water" in John iii, 5, which Nicodemus, a teacher in Israel, was rebuked for not understanding, so clearly was it taught in the Old Testament.

In the same way was the cleansing of sanctification applied to the penitent backslider David (Psalms li, 2, 7), "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And to the cleansing of both regeneration and sanctification does Paul refer in Ephesians v, 26, 27, "That he might

sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of the water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." The grace of this cleansing, whether in regeneration or sanctification, appears from its efficient cause, the blood of Christ: "And one of the elders answered saying unto me: These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence come they? And I say unto him, My Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates into the city."

Now, this internal cleansing, this perfecting in personal holiness, is symbolized by the white robe, or wedding garment: "And it was given unto the Lamb's wife that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints." Note the plural "righteousnesses," which does not mean as the Revision puts it "the righteous acts of the saints." This would flatly contradict the regeneration part of this righteousness (see Titus iii, 5). And so it would contradict the many cleansings of sanctification —"Christ being made unto us sanctification," every time as in David's case, the Spirit applies the same cleansing blood.

It is true enough that the regenerated man, progressing in sanctification, acquires personal character, exhibited in life and good works. But this is not what is meant by the wedding garment of Matthew or the white robe of Revelation, which is the same thing. The white robe means holiness, as God is holy. The means of the cleans-

ing is Christ's atoning blood. This is applied by the Spirit and apprehended by faith. The whole of it is God's work and is of grace from the first cleansing in regeneration to the last cleansing of sanctification. That it is not character on earth is evident from Revelation vi, 11, where it is bestowed after death. So with the teaching of vii, 13, 14, and xix, 7. The glorious result is expressed in Ephesians v, 27—"that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." It will also be forever true that the elect are immune from any *law charge* because wrapped in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us when by faith we are *espoused* to Christ. And also forever true that the white robe of the *marriage* is another thing, being *personal* holiness wrought *in us* by the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Dr. Gill is in error when he expounds the wedding garment to be Christ's righteousness imputed to us, or anything *done for us* in the legal acts of redemption, justification, adoption, and equally so that Dr. Broadus is mistaken when he interprets it to mean our character or life as the embodiment of *deeds done by us,* no matter how much they may have been the fruits of grace. But it means personal holiness *wrought in us* by the Holy Spirit:

(1) By the cleansing of Regeneration when the blood of Christ is applied by the Spirit. Ezekiel xxxvi, 25; Hebrews ix, 14; first clause of x, 22; Titus iii, 5, first clause; I Corinthians vi, 11, first clause.

(2) By the continued cleansing of Sanctification until holiness of spirit is perfected—as in the cleansing of backslidden David (Psalm ii, 2, 7); in the continual changes into Christ's image (II Corinthians iii, 18).

That both the cleansing in Regeneration and the subsequent cleansing of Sanctification are meant is evident from that one supreme proof-text, Ephesians v, 26, compared with Revelation vi, 11, first clause, and vii, 13, 14; xxii, 14.

The plural "righteousnesses" in Revelation xix, 8, refers therefore not to acts of the saints but to the Spirit's acts in the saints.

8. *"I will in no wise blot out his name out of the book of life."* This is the second promise to the faithful at Sardis. Two questions are: (1) What is the book of life, and (2) the exact force of *not blotting out* the name? In all Greek cities, and later at Rome, there was an enrollment of citizens as distinguished from the general population who had no rights of citizenship. Citizenship could be forfeited during life by adjudged infidelity to the city, decided by a vote of the unaccused citizens, followed by erasure of the name. Some of the best citizens were thus, by prejudice, ostracized, as Greek history shows. A Christian citizen of Sardis might thus lose citizenship on account of loyalty to Christ. Of course, death ended this earthly citizenship. It is the object of the promise to contrast the enrolled citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem with the enrolled citizenship in Sardis. The point of contrast lies between two citizenships, the two enrollments, and particularly in the fact that heavenly citizenship, after once being enrolled, was never forfeited: "I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life." Many commentaries miss the point in supposing that the heavenly enrollment is a probationary list, subject to erasure, and that this implication inheres in the promise as well as in the threat of Revelation xxii, 19. Your author is fully persuaded that this position is untenable. He not only admits, but contends, that citizenship was

forfeitable not only in Greek cities and Rome, but also in the Jewish state, but utterly denies it of the heavenly citizenship, and that this very fact is the essence of the promise.

What, then, is the book of life? By its very name it is a register of immortals. "He that believeth in me shall never die"—shall never come into condemnation—"but hath eternal life." The nature of this book may be considered from one of two views:

(1) All his elect as God saw them before the foundation of the world. This would be the list of the original divine purpose. This view has been supported largely by an interpretation of Revelation xiii, 8; xvii, 8; but this interpretation is very doubtful, since it makes the phrase "from the foundation of the world" modify "written in the book" rather than the "Lamb slain." Your Standard Revision supports this view.

(2) A much safer view is that it is a register of judicial decisions, each name written when the owner is justified (Isaiah iv, 3). It has this meaning in Revelation xx, 15; xxi, 27, and Daniel xii, 1. And because this judicial decision is irrevocable, it explains the ground of joy in our Saviour's words to the seventy (Luke x, 20), and the fact that no indictment can be drawn against God's elect, since it is God that *justifies* (Romans viii, 33). See also Philippians iv, 3, and Hebrews xii, 23.

On the meaning of this book and its use at the judgment (Revelation xx, 15) is written this hymn:

"When thou, my righteous judge, shalt come
To take thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall I, who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?
Oh, can I bear the piercing thought:
What if my name shall be left out?"

9. "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my own new name."

Perhaps the most imposing, most ornamental, if not the most useful parts of a great edifice are its pillars. Only the wealth of a king could supply even one of the pillars of the temple of Diana at Ephesus. The surviving pillars in the ruins of ancient temples and cities yet challenge the admiration of the world as masterpieces of human skill and genius. It marked the prominence and importance of James, Cephas and John to be "reputed as pillars" in the Jerusalem church (Galatians ii, 29), and glorified the church when called "the pillar of the truth" (I Timothy iii, 15). To be made, therefore, an everlasting pillar in the heavenly temple is an expression of the highest honour. This honour is enhanced by the inscriptions on it by the divine architect Himself—the name of God, the name of the new Jerusalem, the new name of the architect Himself, to wit: "Faithful and true—King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation xix, 11, 13, 16).

10. "I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne." This is not the throne of *ruling*, expressed in a previous promise, but the throne of final *judgment*. On the last great day, earth's supreme assize, the faithful ones are placed at the Lord's right hand, i.e., on His judgment throne (Matthew xxv, 31, 33), and shall participate with Him in passing judgment on wicked men and angels. Jesus had already promised to His apostles that in the world's regeneration (palingenesia, i.e., the time of the restoration of all things), they

should sit on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew xix, 29). And Paul had said: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (I Corinthians vi, 23). What a reversal of earth condition when the Sanhedrin that tried Peter and John shall be judged by them! When Gallio, Festus, Agrippa and Nero shall stand before Paul's tribunal. What poetic justice when Job and Peter shall judge the devil.

NOTE: The recitation questions on this chapter consist of the meaning of each promise, or part of a promise.—TEACHER.

VII

THE THRONE OF GRACE

Revelation IV and V

IN the preceding chapters on Revelation ii, iii, we have considered an earth-scene of "the things that are"—a most discouraging view. Now we consider a heaven-scene of "the things that are"—a most encouraging view.

The first thought is "the heavens opened." Many people live and die without a vision of heaven. To them heaven is vague and far away, exercising no influence on their lives. Others, by faith, see things invisible. The Old Testament examples of the vision of heaven are worthy of study. The examples are many but I cite only three:

Jacob left home for the first time—to be gone many years and never to see his mother again. Camping one night—all alone—with a stone for his pillow—he dreamed that he saw a stairway reaching from earth to heaven—on which angels descended and ascended. According to the New Testament this stairway was our Lord Jesus Christ restoring communication between heaven and earth. The vision converted Jacob and revolutionized his life. He called that place "the house of God and the Gate of Heaven." That one experience of the sensible presence of God—of heaven's interest in the pilgrims of earth—dissipated his loneliness and fear and never lost its power.

Again, in the discouraging year when King Uzziah died, Isaiah was cheered by a vision of the King who never dies. He saw heaven opened and the throne of eternal mercy—the ministering angels—all aflame with interest in earth's affairs. Yet again, Ezekiel, in the more discouraging times of the exile, had a glorious vision of the throne of grace and its circle of flaming—wide-awake—ministering angels. In the light of the vision exile changed to restoration and restoration to the spiritual eternal Kingdom of God.

So here, chapters iv to v, the heavens are opened to John, the exile on Patmos, and in the light of its vision, the discouraging earth-view of the imperfect churches and pastors is swept away forever and in its stead, through panorama after panorama, he sees the ultimate triumph and universal prevalence of the Kingdom of God.

At the outset let me assure you there is no reason for you to be dismayed at the symbolism of these chapters. The book is a revelation, not a hiding. It is not difficult to understand the leading thoughts and central facts underlying the imagery.

What, then, are the particulars of the vision? First of all he saw a *throne.* We know it to be the throne of *grace* by the rainbow arch above it.

On that throne, whether described by Isaiah, Ezekiel or John, the Almighty is presented in an exceedingly reticent way. No man has seen God directly at any time, nor can see Him. He said to Moses: "You saw no image." So here the Father appears without form or shape—vaguely seen as the brilliance of a jewel. But the thought is clear "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth —let the earth rejoice." Before the throne is a *sea.* In this and other apocalyptic books—the sea represents

the peoples or nations of the earth—with this difference: As seen on earth Satan appears dominant over the sea of peoples. It is there storm-tossed (Daniel vii, 2, 3), one beast (or nation) rising up after another. But before God in heaven, who overrules, that sea (of nations) becomes placid as a mirror. To Him the nations are but drops of water in a bucket. He sees a representation of the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit: "Seven lamps of fire—which are the seven Spirits of God." Seven is a perfect number meaning any number necessary, but here just seven to show that the Omnipresent Spirit is with each of the seven churches named in the preceding chapters. If a hundred churches on earth had been named, the symbolisms here would have been "one hundred lamps of fire which are the hundred Spirits of God."

He saw the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, not as He was before the creation of the world, but as a Lamb that had been slain now alive to die no more.

So he saw all the Holy Trinity and each in a way to identify the throne as a throne of grace—the Father and the rainbow—a Spirit for every church—the Son as a Lamb once slain but now alive.

He sees the *Cherubim* or "four living ones." Do not follow the common version "four beasts" as if the Greek word were "*therion*" as in Romans xiii, 1, but "*zoa*," living ones. Now, as there is more confusion of mind concerning the Cherubim than perhaps any other thing it is my purpose to give you a clear conception of them gathered from the Scriptures alone.

1. The *Cherubim* of Ezekiel x, 1-20, are the same as "living ones" of Ezekiel i, 5, and Revelation iv, 6, (Greek *Zoa*), and the same as the *Seraphim* of Isaiah vi, 2. *Seraphim* expresses merely the glowing flames or lumi-

nous quality of the *Cherubim.* It is human rhetoric or poetic license that makes them distinct orders of beings.

2. Their *number* is always and only four (Ezekiel i, 5; x, 10; Revelation iv, 6). But as from an east, west, north or south angle of vision only two can be seen, so on the mercy-seat—an east view—only two can be made visible. Hence the directions to Moses to make two (Exodus xxv, 18).

3. The Cherubim are *Angels,* but angels of high honour and princely character always nearest the throne of God, as seen by Isaiah, Ezekiel and John. That they are angels is evident from Psalms civ, 4, correctly interpreted by Hebrews i, 7. It is more evident from I Peter i, 12, referring to the posture of the Cherubim bending over and gazing down upon the mercy-seat: "Which things *angels* desire to look into." Hence also Cherubim were placed on a great veil that shrouded the most holy place as if endeavouring to peep through that veil and comprehend the mystery of Redemption.

4. They are not angels of wrath but always associated with the throne of *grace,* as you may see by tracing the word through a Concordance. Every manifestation of mercy exhibits them. God, intervening for fallen men, is always represented as sitting, or dwelling, or appearing or speaking between or among the Cherubim. As the Shekinah, or sword-flame, He dwelt between the Cherubim, to keep open the way to the tree of life, when the throne of grace was established at the east of the district of Eden when man was expelled from Paradise (Genesis iii, 24; see rendering in Jamison, Faussett and Brown), and there Abel found him and through atoning sacrifice and faith found his way back to the tree of life (Genesis iv, 4, and Hebrews xi, 4).

This precise idea of Genesis was embodied by divine directions to Moses in the construction of the mercy-seat of the Tabernacle (Exodus xxv, 18-22; xxvi, 31; xxxvii, 8).

Here, between the Cherubim, God's *voice* was heard (Numbers vii, 89). Here God *dwelt* (I Samuel i, 24; II Samuel vi, 2; Psalms lxxx, 1; xcix, 1; Isaiah xxxvii, 16; Hebrews ix, 5). And so in the temple of Solomon (I Kings vi, 23; II Kings xix, 15; I Chronicles, xiii, 6). And just so in Ezekiel's ideal temple (Ezekiel xli, 18).

5. The four Cherubim, combined, constitute the *Chariot* of God, moving on purposes of mercy (I Chronicles xxviii, 18; Psalms xviii, 10). In this chariot of fire Elijah ascended to heaven (II Kings ii, 11). Compare the sarcasm of Isaiah xxvii, 18, on the death of Shebna. Doubtless also it was this angel-chariot that met the beggar Lazarus at the depot of death and carried him away to banquet with Abraham in the kingdom of heaven (Luke xvi, 22). Hence, not without power, and certainly with instructed piety, the happy camp-meeting negroes of the South are accustomed to sing:

"Swing low, sweet chariot!"

If ever that fire-chariot goes on a mission of wrath it is always, like the wrath of the Lamb, because of mercy despised (Isaiah lxv, 15). The heavenly realities which forecast these symbols for tabernacle and temple in the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel and John certainly indicate the angelic interest and activity of the Cherubim in the plan, method and work of salvation.

6. Each Cherub is symbolically represented with four faces, fronting east, south, west and north, to indicate their power to see, and their readiness to move in any

direction without turning around. So, in the description of Ezekiel. To illustrate, the camp of Israel fronted four ways, three tribes on each of the four sides. In military maneuvers a battalion may form a hollow square, facing and fighting in four directions.

7. The different faces expressed the qualities of the Cherubim. The face of a man indicated intelligence, and sympathy with man; the face of the eagle indicated endurance and strength; the face of the lion indicated great powers of vision and flight; the face of the ox indicated courage. Thus, facing east you see the face of a man, and one side you see the face of an eagle, and on the other side the face of an ox, and on the back view the face of a lion.

8. The highest number of wings actually named as in use at one time is six (Isaiah vi, 2; Revelation iv, 8), yet there must have been two wings for each face—eight altogether. The idea conveyed is that they are always ready to fly in the direction any face fronted without turning round. The number of wings seen at any time depended on circumstances, particularly on the angle of vision. Seen over the mercy-seat, from an east front, only two faces and four wings are visible; seen at rest every wing is folded and none are visible (Ezekiel i, 25).

9. The wheels represent the means of movement on earth, as the wings represent the means of movement in the air. There was a wheel for each face (Ezekiel i, 15). Now, as a pair of wings for each face indicated capacity and readiness to fly in the direction that face fronted, so the same idea is expressed in the earth motion by "a wheel within a wheel." To grasp this thought, conceive of one tire of a wagon wheel pressed into another at right angles. Such a double wheel would not only stand of itself, but without turning could be rolled in four direc-

tions. With the exercise of a little ingenuity, you can make a double pasteboard wheel that embodies the idea. That is a wheel within a wheel. It can roll any one of four ways without turning. The same thought may be seen in the rollers of the legs of a table that enables you to push or pull in any direction without turning the table. Ezekiel repeatedly presents this thought, that whether the Cherubim fly with wings, or glide on wheels, they never turn around. They always move straight forward, whether it be one Cherub or four. If the four be together, two faces and four wings and two wheels front every cardinal point of the compass, being ever ready to see, fly or glide north, east, south or west without turning. In any element, land, sea or air they are ever ready for sight or movement in four directions. An auto must turn round for a new direction, but the Cherubim moves straight forward—the chariot of God never made a turn. Dr. J. R. Graves borrowed from Ezekiel's Cherubim, i.e., "A wheel within a wheel," his idea of Methodism, as set forth in his "Great Iron Wheel"—but he utterly missed Ezekiel's idea of the number of wheels and their relative size and position. Ezekiel's wheel was double, each of the same size, and interfitted at right angles. Dr. Graves' idea was one big wheel, a smaller one in that, and a still smaller in that, all fitted in laterally, and not at right angles and connected by spokes jointed into a central hub, the hub representing the bishops, the innermost wheel representing the presiding elders, the next wheel the preachers in charge and the outer wheel the class leaders—and the whole wheel rolling over the members.

This symbolical idea of the Cherubim fitted for motion in any element is embodied somewhat in the aeroplane

—in the air it is a bird, in the water it is a boat, on land it is a wheeled wagon.

10. The leg of the Cherub had no knee and the foot no joints, to indicate that movement was purely volitional, no bending of knee or foot, no laboured steps, but a gliding motion, like roller skates or other skates on ice. I have dreamed, more than once in my life, of possessing this volitional gliding movement either on the earth or in the air—the will only acted. That is, I dreamed that just by willing I could lift myself up and, without exertion or fatigue, could glide. Doubtless we will all possess this volitional power of movement in the better world. Our autos must carry an oil supply, and a crank for ignition, but in Ezekiel's Cherubim "the Spirit" or motor power resided in the wheel (Ezekiel i, 20; i, 12), the power turned off or on by will, not mechanism.

11. Their swiftness of movement, whether on the land, or through the air, is compared to a flash of lightning (Ezekiel i, 14). For instance, combined the four Cherubim into a chariot which could go east to west and back again just by a mental movement. They could go forward and back again as quick as a flash of lightning appears and disappears.

12. The rims or felloes of the wheel, Ezekiel says, were very high and dreadful, and like the wings full of eyes—to indicate vision in every direction, power of perception incalculably great. No man-made wheel was ever like this. The Ferris wheel at the Chicago Fair was a toy in comparison.

13. The appearance of the Cherubim in motion was exceedingly luminous—Ezekiel says like coals of fire, or torches. The fire was exceedingly bright, radiating flashes of lightning (Ezekiel i, 13). They constituted

indeed a "chariot of fire." And he says that the noise of their wings was like the roaring of an ocean storm—like the voice of the Almighty—or like the tumult of great armies.

14. Under each wing was the hand of a man (Ezekiel i, 3). That is, each Cherub had two hands for each of the four faces. Hence the hand of one of the Cherubim touched the lips of Isaiah with a coal from the altar, cleansing and inspiring him to speak for God. And in the same way a hand of one of the Cherubim extended to Ezekiel a book of Revelation. These various organs of sight, motion and touch expressed in a symbolic way the capacity of the Cherubim for varied activity, in the highest conception of motion, sight, touch and light. Heathen mythology sought to express these extraordinary powers in the hundred eyes of Argus, the hundred hands of Briareus, the seven heads of the Hydra and the varied shapes of Proteus and the man-horse Centaur. Parables and symbols are far more expressive than literal speech.

15. The last thought: In the light of these scriptures concerning these Cherubim we confront some surprises in the way of interpretation. First, that art paints a cherub with the winged face of a baby. Second, that even such a theologian as Dr. Strong should deny any real existence to the Cherubim, making them only a symbolic representation of glorified humanity. See his article on the Cherubim in his "Philosophy and Religion." This idea of the Cherubim representing glorified humanity is based on the doubtful reading in our lesson, the word "us," Greek "emas," in Revelation v, 9, which makes the Cherubim sing a song declaring "Thou hast redeemed *us* with thy blood,"—that is the way the Common Version reads. Of course, if the Cherubim are

redeemed with the blood of Christ they cannot be angels. But the best manuscript authority leaves out that *us*—so does your American Standard Revision of that verse. A still wilder interpretation makes the four Cherubim stand for animate creation as represented by man, ox, eagle, lion. Yet the wildest of all makes them mean the four continents—Asia, Africa, Europe and America.

The Cherubim that John saw in this vision are represented as saying tirelessly, continuously: "Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty."

John saw twenty-four elders in priestly garb, seated on twenty-four thrones, each with a crown, a harp and a bowl of incense (see iv, 4, 10; v, 8). The crown and throne indicate their royalty, the harp signifies their praise and the incense their prayers. The white robes and the offering of incense represent their priestly office. The number twenty-four represents the perpetuity of their service. David divided the priesthood into twenty-four courses, or reliefs, so that by successive rotation in service, the temple worship should be perpetual (see reference to Zacharias in Luke i, 8, 9, 23). The antitype is the universal priesthood of all Christians under the New Covenant: "Ye are to be a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices—a royal priesthood" (I Peter ii, 5, 9). Or, as John has already expressed it in this book: "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto God" (i, 6).

You must be careful to note that the adoration, praise and prayers of Christ's royal, New Testament priests are offered on *earth*. But John's symbolism here is to show how these earth-offerings reach heaven, and avail there. We know by experience, the adoring, praising and praying down here, but we could not know without revelation the other end of the line, the reception ac-

corded to and the profit arising from this earth service. The vision means: "I will show you your song and prayer entering heaven." The adoration of the King-Christian on earth, when it gets to heaven, casts the crown of earthly royalty before God's throne of grace and sings: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

The next thing that he sees is a sealed book, which the Father holds in His right hand. You are not to think of a book like the printed Bible. The books of that time were manuscript of parchment and rolled around a staff. Suppose I had a long piece of parchment each end fastened to a staff or roller, interspaced into seven sections, each section sealed up when rolled around the staff. Then there would be the other staff to which the last part of the roll would be attached, and when you read it you unroll it from one staff and roll it after reading around the other staff. What you have read would keep getting larger and larger, and what you had to read would keep getting smaller and smaller, and when you have emptied one staff the other would be full.

John saw that this roll or book was written on both sides, every space covered, which signified that nothing more is to be added to it. It is complete. Now, the question is: What does that seven sealed roll mean? The rest of the book will show you that it is a disclosure of future events concerning the Kingdom of God. God knew its contents, but it was sealed from human and angelic sight, and when the question was asked: "Who can break the seals and open this book?" neither man nor angel could respond. John wept at the thought. Then one of the Cherubim comforted him: "You need not weep, the Lion of Judah, the root of David, the Lamb

slain from the foundation of the world, Jesus Christ in his glory, can break these seals and open that roll."

Now, it is the object of the book, from chapter v on, to forecast in symbolic imagery the salient points of our Lord's Kingdom. Both sides of the roll were covered with writing, every space was filled to indicate, as I suppose, the completeness of the revelation, so that at the end of the book it could be said that no man should add to it or take from it; it was complete. When it was announced that this Revelator would unseal that book, both Cherubim and Elders unite in singing this new song: "Worthy art thou to take the book and open the seals; for thou wast slain and died to purchase unto God with thy blood (not "us," but)—men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign upon the earth." That is, while He reigns in heaven, they reign on earth.

Now, when the twenty-four Elders, representing the perpetual priesthood of God's people, and the four Cherubim sang that song, then the countless host of angels took it up. The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousands of thousands. "Worthy is the Lamb that has been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory." Now, when the uncountable angels of God sang that song, there came an echo to the song (13th verse), "and every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth, and in the earth and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying: Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing and the honour and the glory and the dominion forever and ever." This must be the thought of Paul: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy

to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, and not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Which means that the earth, man's habitat, cursed when man sinned (Genesis iii, 17), shall partake of man's redemption, so that from the great flood of fire attending our Lord's final advent, there shall emerge a new heaven and a new earth (II Peter iii, 13; Revelation xxi, 1).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What the first thought of this revelation?
2. Cite Old Testament examples of the thought.
3. To most Christians how does heaven appear, and the consequent effect on their happiness, usefulness and life?
4. What the power of hearing heavenly voices and seeing heavenly visions? Illustrate by Stephen.
5. What the *throne* revealed in this vision, and what symbol indicates it?
6. In what way the Father revealed?—The Spirit?—The Son?
7. What do the Elders represent—the meaning of the 24—meaning of "harp"—of "incense"—and is it a picture of adoration praise, and prayer as offered on earth, or as reaching heaven?

The Cherubim

8. The difference, if any, between Seraphim and Cherubim?
9. Prove from Ezekiel, tenth chapter, that Cherubim and "living creatures" are the same.
10. Prove that the Cherubim are angels.
11. What their number always?
12. Explain the symbolism of four faces, eight hands, eight wings, four wheels?
13. Illustrate a "wheel within a wheel."

14. What use did J. R. Graves make of "a wheel within a wheel" and how did he misapply the imagery?
15. Meaning of the form of the several faces—man, eagle, ox, lion?
16. Cite the passages proving that the four cherubim combined constitute the chariot of God, and give instances of use.
17. Where the spirit or motor-power, of the chariot, and compare with auto and aeroplane?
18. With what are the Cherubim always associated, and cite proof from the tabernacle—the temple, and Ezekiel's ideal temple?
19. What the sealed book, and explain how the seven seals are applied, and how each seal in succession when broken would reveal only a part of the book?
20. What the meaning of "sea" in this book, and explain why this sea seen in heaven is placid, and on earth disturbed?
21. Who governs the earth sea, and cite proof? (See Revelation xii, 17; xiii, 1.)

VIII

THE OPENING OF THE SEALS

Revelation VI, 1—VIII, 1

THE theme of this chapter is the opening of the seals, or the gospel *as preached* from John's time to the final advent of our Lord. As you observe, this study concludes with the 1st verse of the eighth chapter, separated from its context by artificial chapter division—it should be the last verse of the seventh chapter. The study introduces the prophetic element of the book, which extends to the end. From the standpoint of the writer, it is the first revelation of "the things which shall come to pass hereafter."

We will consider first the Revelator. In the gospel our Lord is Himself the revelation of God the Father: here He is the Revelator. The 6th verse of the fifth chapter thus presents Him: "A Lamb standing as though he had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God." The seven horns indicate fulness of authority and power in each of the seven churches. The seven eyes, explained as the seven Spirits of God, indicate His sending of the Holy Spirit, who on earth is His vicar and bears witness to Him alone, and through whom He is present with and controls the seven churches. His worthiness to be the Revelator, and to constitute His people a kingdom and priests, and to receive all power, riches, wisdom, might,

honour, glory, blessings and dominion, is expressly ascribed to His vicarious expiation of sin as the Lamb slain. This appears in the fifth chapter, verses 9, 10, 12, 13, and His worthiness on this ground is recognized by the united voices of Cherubim, Elders, all the Holy Angels and by the whole creation. So qualified, He opens the seals and reveals in sublime imagery the future of the Kingdom of God. And so this revelation is prophecy.

The seven disclosures which follow the opening of the seven seals are divided into two distinct groups: a group of four and a group of three. The four are introduced, one after another, by the four Cherubim in succession, and in response to their "Come," "Come," "Come," "Come," appear horses varying in colour. With the group of three the Cherubim appear to have no direct connection. The fifth seal disclosure reveals the impatient martyr-cry for vengeance, uttered on earth indeed, but here presented as it reaches heaven, and the sixth seal discloses portents which herald the long delayed vengeance for which the martyrs prayed. The opening of the seventh seal is followed by these words: "There was silence in heaven for half an hour." That is to say, temporarily there is no disclosure of what followed the opening of the seventh seal—the climax for a while is suppressed. We do not get to what that seventh seal would have disclosed until we reach the climax in the twentieth chapter, and in every other synchronous view there is a pause, or a suppression of the climax which, when it comes, fits all four of the synchronous views. We have already seen the agency of the Cherubim in giving revelations to Isaiah and Ezekiel.

Now, let us take up this study in order. When our

glorified Lord opened the first seal, one of the Cherubim shouted like thunder: "Come"—not "come and see" as the King James version has it, as if spoken to John; not "come Lord Jesus, in thy final advent" as the pre-millennial interpreter would have it. The Cherub says "Come," and he is not calling either John or Jesus—they are both there with him. We know what each Cherub called for by what appeared in answer to the call. There appeared in succession, following the "Come," "Come," "Come," "Come," four horses with their riders. This imagery of different coloured horses is borrowed from the book of Zechariah. In a paragraph of the first chapter and in the whole of the sixth chapter, we have Zechariah's vision of the different coloured horses and the chariots, which are explained as the four spirits which stand before the throne of God, and go forth unto all the earth at the bidding of God, and by whom all the earth is quieted. Here in our lesson we see these horses all going forth at the bidding of the four living creatures. In Zechariah the result of the going forth is the crowning of Joshua the high priest, followed by these words: "Behold the man whose name is the Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build a temple of Jehovah, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both"—that is, between the king and the priest—"and the crowns shall be distributed among his followers."

Here in our study the result is somewhat the same—the crowning of Christ the royal priest is followed by the crowning of all His followers. In Zechariah we have the type of the successful issue of the rebuilding of the temple through Joshua and Zerubbabel, or high priest and civil government, and that in spite of all

opposition. Here in Revelation, through these opened seals, we see the antitype, Christ's successful building of His spiritual temple and the crowning of all His followers. In Zechariah all the chariots, no matter what the colour of horses, contribute an appropriate part toward the glorious result, so here the work imaged by all these horses, whether apparently good or bad in individual result, conspired together to one glorious result. We cannot rightly interpret Revelation without antecedent understanding of these horses and chariots of Zechariah. But more particularly:

When one of the Cherubim said "Come," the record states that there appeared a white horse and a rider who had a crown on his head, and carried a bow, and he went forth conquering and to conquer. This imagery shows the saving power of the gospel preached, to those who lovingly receive it, even unto the end of time. We shall see this same white horse and his rider reappear in the last synchronous view, nineteenth chapter and 11th verse, but in a somewhat different rôle. The Old Testament prophecies throw much light on this royal rider and conquerer. In this connection I ask you to turn to the forty-fifth Psalm, and read from the 1st to the 8th verse: "My heart overfloweth with a goodly matter; I speak the things which I have made touching the king. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Mighty One, thy glory and in thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride on prosperously; because of truth and meekness and righteousness: and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under thee; they are in the heart of the king's enemies. Thy throne, O God, is

for ever and ever; a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom; thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia; out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made thee glad."

Now, that tribute to the king in the forty-fifth Psalm, going forth conquering, shooting his arrows, is very similar in meaning to this rider on the white horse that goes forth conquering and to conquer. So to interpret our vision, we must conceive of the risen, ascended and glorified Christ receiving the kingdom, as it is set forth in the 13th and 14th verses of the seventh chapter of Daniel: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto the Son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before them, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all the people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." In the 18th verse it says: "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever."

That passage in the seventh chapter of Daniel tells of Christ's ascension, and of His reception of the kingly power, and the manner in which He enlarged the kingdom here upon earth. It is in line with this rider on the white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer.

Again we have a similar thought in the second Psalm. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision, Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," and it concludes by saying: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little," and "all the uttermost parts of the earth are given unto him for his possession." The second Psalm is in line with the forty-fifth, and with the seventh chapter of Daniel, and portrays substantially what is accomplished by the rider on the white horse going forth conquering and to conquer.

Again, in the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm it is said: "The Lord said unto my lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." That is spoken to Christ when He ascended into heaven after His resurrection. And then it goes on to show that from His throne in heaven Christ reigns here on earth, and that in the day He leads out His armies His young men shall be volunteers—not conscripts. And they shall go forth in the beauties of holiness and be as multitudinous as the drops of the dew in the dawn of the morning. Christ in heaven, having received His kingdom, is dispensing His word on earth through the Spirit, the churches and the preachers. So the going forth of the white horse with its rider, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, signifies the gospel preached in its triumph. It brings life and peace to those who receive it and love it. It is so presented in the tenth chapter of Matthew and 13th verse: "When you go into a city or unto a house, say, Peace be on this house, and if there be in that house a son of peace, this peace shall rest on him."

This is the signification of the opening of the first seal, and we see the agency of the Cherubim in bringing it about. Now we take up

The Second Seal—sixth chapter and 4th verse: "And another horse came forth, a red horse, and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, that they should slay one another. And there was given unto him a great sword." That means, in plain English, this: The divisive effect of the gospel preached to the end of time, in harmony with these words in the tenth chapter of Matthew, 34th to 36th verse: "I came not to send peace, but a sword, for I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

This red horse shows the same gospel preached, but having a different effect, according to the words of our Lord, as I have just read them. Now, while the gospel is intended for love and peace, as presented in the imagery of the first horse and his rider, and while that effect follows when the gospel is lovingly received, yet on account of its high demands many reject it, and so it becomes the occasion of bitterness, contention and strife. You can easily see why this is true, because the gospel wars against all selfishness, all impiety, all social evils, all idolatry and every wicked business. Those following these evils array themselves against the gospel as its bitterest enemies when its preaching disturbs them. Take the case presented in the sixteenth chapter of Acts. Paul in the city of Philippi finds a poor girl possessed with a demon, owned by a syndicate of men, who count her money value in proportion to her subjection to the demon that possesses her, and they make

their money out of the prostitution of this woman's soul to Satan. Now the gospel comes there in the mouth of Paul and casts out that evil spirit. The result is that this syndicate, when they saw that the hope of their gain was gone, arrested Paul and Silas.

It had precisely this effect at Ephesus. It went forth conquering and to conquer, like the white horse. After a while it strikes the business of Demetrius, a silversmith, and other silversmiths, who were making a big pile of money out of selling silver shrines representing the goddess Diana, and as Paul preached that "these be no gods that are made with hands," Demetrius said: "This man is breaking up our business," and he raised a row, with the result that Paul finally left the city. Now, everywhere that the gospel is preached some will receive it lovingly, and some will reject its high claims and make for division, bitterness and strife.

If any one of you go to a place and preach, and a mother of a family is converted, the unconverted father gets mad—or the daughter is converted and the son gets mad. There the gospel seems to have been the occasion of strife.

The Third Seal: "The third Cherub said, Come, and I saw, and behold, a black horse, and he that sat thereon had a balance [that is, a pair of scales] in his hands. And I heard, as it were, a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying: A measure of wheat for a shilling; and three measures of barley for a shilling." What does that imagery represent? It represents the gospel in the hands of the hireling and apostate church, doling it out in tiny bits at high famine prices. The Bible is locked up in the Latin Version, the people are shut out from it only as it is vouchsafed in corrupt fragments, and a charge is made for every re-

ligious service from the cradle to the grave. The house of God has scales in it, and when the weary soul comes up the minister weighs out a fragment of consolation for so much. "If I baptize your baby, so much; if I marry you, so much; if I visit you in sickness, so much; if I attend your funeral, so much; if I pray for your dead, so much; for an indulgence, so much." It was Tetzel's sale of indulgences that provoked the Reformation. Its blessings are beyond the reach of the poor. For example, in Mexico, as a distinguished Mexican general told me some years ago when I was in Mexico: "The multitude of our people cannot marry—they cannot pay the price that the priest charges; hence concubinage all over the land. They cannot read the Bible; the priest doles out to them such parts as he judges to be good for them and that must be accepted as the priests interpret it." The famine as it is represented by this horse, is not of food for the body, but of food for the soul. As Amos says (viii, 11): "Behold the day is come, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah." Now, that is the kind of a famine that this black horse indicates. Through many centuries since Christ died some ecclesiastics have thus doled out, not only God's word, but have put a price on every religious favor.

The Fourth Seal (chapter vi, 7): "And when he opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying: Come, and I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and he that sat upon him his name was Death, and Hades followed with him." Hades is the state of being disembodied. When the body is killed the spirit goes into the spirit-world. "And there was given unto him the fourth part of the earth to kill with the

sword, and famine, and death, and the wild beasts of the earth." Now, what does that mean? This imagery represents the lovers of the true gospel as persecuted unto death—sword, hunger, death, and the wild beasts are all literal. Some Christians are put to death by the sword, some die of starvation, some put to death by torture or the martyr's stake, and some cast to the wild beasts. The application is to all persecutions for conscience' sake at any time, whether Pagan, Papal, or Protestant. Our Lord foretold that as they went forth to preach they would be persecuted, and told them to fear not them that killed the body only, but rather to fear him that was able to destroy both soul and body in hell. It refers to the persecution then going on in John's time, and to the ten years' tribulation that followed in Smyrna, the death of their pastor and all the other persecutions until the apostate church becomes enthroned at Rome. Then all the Roman Catholic persecutions, the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Lollards, Huss, Jerome, Luther, the horrible persecution in Spain and in Holland and all the Low Country under the Duke of Alva and his soldiers; and it also refers to the persecution by the Protestants when they were in power, and the persecution of the Baptists by Luther, the persecution of Servetus by John Calvin, the persecution of the Baptists in England and the United States. The idea of the four horses is not necessarily successive. In any age all four results of the gospel preached may appear. That is not the thought, but these are four different views of the reception of the gospel as it is preached. You may find all of them illustrated in two persons. A sermon may be preached, two men sitting side by side. One of them receives it and he is at peace; the other, his brother, hates it, and there is a strife between the two brothers. Finally the brother

that hates gets so far away from the word of God that in his soul there is a famine of the word of God. Then his hate becomes so intense that he kills his brother.

In the parable of our Lord, called "The Sower," or the four kinds of soil, you have a thought very similar. The sower went forth to sow, and the seed fell in four different places, and what became of the seed as it fell in these four different places is explained by our Lord in His interpretation of the parable.

The Fifth Seal (verse 9): "And when he opened the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar the souls of them who had been slain for the word of God, for this testimony which they held, and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given unto each of them a white robe, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet a little while that their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course."

In all the persecutions under the fourth seal, each impatient martyr, while yet suffering, was crying out for God's vindication. In effect the complaint against God's delay of vengeance was an impeachment of divine justice. On earth these prayers seemed vain. But the object of the disclosure of the fifth seal is to show you heaven's reception of the martyr-cry for vengeance uttered on earth. The idea is similar in Genesis iv, 10, 11; God's words to Cain: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive it." Spurgeon, in glowing imagery, pictures Abel's spirit, evicted from its clay tenement by murder, rushing into heaven's court and crying: "Vengeance on my murderer," and happily contrasts it with Christ's

blood, "which speaketh better things for us than the blood of Abel, even crying: Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." A good exposition of the fifth seal may be found in our Lord's parable (Luke xviii, 1-8). The Lord is exhorting men to pray all the time for vindication, and not to faint, illustrating it by the widow and the unjust judge, and concluding by saying: "And shall not God avenge his own elect that cry to him day and night, and yet he is long-suffering over them." Then He adds: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh shall he find that *faith* on the earth?" What faith? The faith that God will ultimately avenge the injuries done to His people. It does not mean, shall He find a saving faith on the earth? There are hundreds of people—thousands of them—who have saving faith, but yet seem to have little or no faith that God will vindicate all their wrongs.

I want to present that more particularly, as it is very important. In Bulwer's drama of "Richelieu," the Queen of France—Anne of Austria—said to the sceptical Cardinal, who was her enemy: "The Almighty, my Lord Cardinal, does not pay every week, but at the last He pays." The things occurring here in which for the time being evil triumphs, give the saints great discouragement, and they cry out because God does not speedily execute judgment on their oppressors. So the object of the fifth seal is not to show us the prayers as they are uttered here on earth, but what becomes of them when they get to heaven. He saw, under the altar, the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of the Lord, and they cried out "how long?" That cry was uttered on earth, but is here shown as heaven received it. His reply is: "I will clothe you in white now, but rest a while; wait until the time of vengeance comes; wait until

all other martyrs fulfil their course, and then all at once God will fully avenge you."

Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," and his "History of the United Netherlands," tell how the Spaniards capture city after city. No mercy is shown; the men are killed, the women are subjected to shameful indignities; the children are impaled on spears or their heads cut off and fastened to spikes, and every conceivable evil and horror is visited upon them, until the question rises: "Where is God?" We need to recall the words of the German poet, Von Logau,

> "The mills of God grind slowly,
> But they grind exceeding small;
> Though with patience He stands waiting,
> With *exactness* grinds He all."

Law writers tell us that laws restrain crime only as punishment is speedy and certain. An Old Testament writer anticipated their wisdom: "Because sentence against an evil deed is not speedily executed, the hearts of evil-doers are fully set in them to do mischief." Shakespeare, in "Hamlet," makes "the law's delay" provocation for suicide. So the lesson of Paul is hard: "Avenge not yourself—give place to God's wrath; if thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink, and by so doing heap coals of fire on his head."

God's delay in avenging is explicable by the facts:

1. No criminal can escape.
2. No bribery, perjury or technicality can avail.
3. The sufferer is trained in patience by tribulation.
4. No witness can abscond.
5. The punishment will be complete and exactly proportioned to the heinousness of the offence.
6. God delays to punish that there may be space for

repenting. (See Acts iii, 14, 19; Romans ii, 4; II Peter iii, 8, 9, 15.)

John Milton quotes our very passage (Revelation vi, 10), and applies it to the evils perpetrated on the Albigenses by the Roman Catholic church. He says: "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold."

The Sixth Seal: "And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, that there was a great earthquake, and the sun became as black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken by a great wind, and the heaven was removed as a scroll as it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places, and the kings of the earth and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich and the strong and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves, and the rocks of the mountains, and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who is able to stand?" The opening of this seal reveals the portents that herald God's final vengeance.

Now, you see that that sixth seal brings you to the end of time. Our Lord also says in His great prophecy in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew: "After the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened as by an eclipse, and the moon will not give her light, and the stars shall fall." It is certain that there comes a time when God does answer the long deferred petition of His people for vengeance upon their oppressors.

The seventh chapter presents this great thought: That God's imminent wrath, just about to fall, is suspended

until all the righteous are sealed and so safe-guarded. And then follows the sealing of the 144,000 of the Jews; a symbolic number representing 12,000 or a complete number from each tribe, and then a great multitude that no man can number, out of every nation, and tribe, and tongue and country. Every one of them must be saved before those terrible convulsions that attend the advent of our Lord, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, when the whole world shall be wrapped in fire. It cannot take place as long as a righteous man is living on the earth, or a righteous man's dead body is sleeping in a grave. These must get out of the way first. As when Abraham said to God: "You are about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? It may be there are fifty good men in that city; will you destroy them?" He said, "If there be fifty, no"—perhaps forty—perhaps thirty—perhaps twenty—perhaps ten. And when not ten could be found, the angel grasped hold of the only righteous man, Lot, and said to him: "We cannot visit God's wrath upon this place until you get out," and they dragged him out. So the vengeance that comes with this advent does not reach this earth until each child of God is secure.

The Seventh Seal: It says that when the seventh seal was opened "there was a silence in heaven for half an hour." Which means, that there is no disclosure just yet. The silence will be broken when the climax of all the synchronous views arrives. That climax is Revelation xx, 11-15, which agrees with the climax of our Lord's other great prophecy—Matthew xxv, 31-46, and with Paul's climax, II Thessalonians ii, 6-11. In the same way and for the same purpose, the disclosure of the seven thunders is sealed up for a while. That is, that silence will be broken after a while, and you will be told

what would have happened right there—it is just a temporary suspension of the climax, which will be clearly stated when you come to it. Every one of the parallel views before you: the seals, the trumpets, the two women, the great holy war, every one of them will stop just before the climax. And then in the twentieth chapter and the 11th verse we have the climax that fits every one of them. He means to say that there must be silence and no record of what the seventh seal would disclose for a while; so when the seven thunders were about to sound, He says: "Do not record that; wait."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. In a word, what do the disclosures following the opening of the seals represent?
2. What the symbol of the Revelator, and meaning of seven horns and seven eyes?
3. On what meritorious ground is all the worthiness of this Revelator based?
4. Name, and discriminate between, the two groups of these seven disclosures.
5. State negatively and affirmatively to whom the Cherubim say "Come."
6. From what Old Testament book is the imagery of the colored horses borrowed, and what the meaning and result in this lesson?

SEALS

7. Describe the first horse and his rider—what the meaning and where again in this book do this horse and rider appear?
8. Cite at least four Old Testament prophecies whose forecast is similar to the meaning here.
9. In a word, what phase of the gospel preached is expressed in the imagery of the red horse and his rider, and what saying of our Lord expressed the same thing?
10. Why this divisive effect of the gospel preached, and illustrate by two notable instances in the Acts?
11. In a few words explain the imagery of the black horse and his rider, holding a pair of scales, and illustrate historically.
12. Meaning of the imagery of Death riding the pale horse, following by Hades?

13. What parable of our Lord exhibits some likeness to these four horses?
14. Explain the disclosure under the fifth seal, citing Genesis case and Spurgeon's use of it.
15. What parable of our Lord expounds the fifth seal, and the meaning of "that faith"?
16. Cite the passage from Bulwer's "Richelieu." From Von Logau.
17. What things help to explain the delay in God's vengeance?
18. How does Milton apply the cry of the martyrs in vi, 10?
19. What does the opening of the sixth seal reveal?
20. Where in our Lord's great prophecy are they similarly presented?
21. What the great thought of the seventh chapter?
22. Explain the silence after the seventh seal.

IX

THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS

Revelation VIII, 2—X, 1

WE now take up that section of the book of Revelation that relates to the sounding of the seven trumpets, which commences at the 2d verse of the eighth chapter, and extends to the end of the eleventh chapter. But I shall not be able to expound the entire section in one chapter; I will try, however, to cover so much of it as extends to the 8th verse of the tenth chapter, leaving for the next study the most of the tenth chapter and the whole of the eleventh. You will observe that, as in the seals, here there are two groups, four and three. There was quite a distinction between the first group of seals and the three that followed; and so there will be quite a distinction between the group of four trumpets and the three that follow.

The general meaning of the sounding of the trumpets is the gospel *as prayed* from John's time to the second coming of Christ. The seals, you will remember, was the gospel *as preached* from John's time to the second advent. Every sounding of a trumpet comes as a response, not to a sermon, but to a prayer. We make a great mistake when we limit the power of the gospel to its preaching, for a very large part of its power is dependent upon its praying. The preaching is more conspicuous, and oftentimes a preacher takes credit to

himself for the power of his sermons, when perhaps the power came from some obscure member of the church who prayed while he preached. Realizing this, I made it a habit of my pastoral life to engage a number of the most spiritually minded members of my church to enter into a covenant to pray for me every Sunday while I preached. Even the apostle Paul felt his great dependence upon the prayers of his brethren and sisters, and earnestly solicited their prayers. Just so I would count, in a great effort to endow a seminary, as much upon the friends of the seminary who *prayed* for its endowment as upon the agents who *worked* for its endowment. It is an old saying that "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees."

The key-passage of this section is as follows (viii, 3-5): "And another angel came and stood over the altar"—that means not the brazen altar of sacrifice, but the golden altar of incense—"having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel taketh the censer and he filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake."

A Bible student should understand the relative positions and distinctive purposes of the brazen altar and the golden altar. The first was in the outer court and for sacrifices. The other was in the holy place, and was for prayer based on the preceding sacrifice. Hence, the prayer "for Christ's sake"—that is because He died for us. Prayer without expiation has no foundation.

It is evident from this key-passage that what the trum-

pets will tell us about comes as a response to prayers offered to God, and when that censer is emptied upon the earth, then the trumpets begin to sound, each trumpet a response to prayers.

Let the reader note that this angel standing over the golden altar with the golden censer, which holds the incense, representing prayers on earth coming up before God in heaven, is the great high priest Jesus Christ Himself, the angel of the covenant. Throughout the whole Old Testament the offering of incense before the mercy-seat symbolizes prayers offered in the outer court. David says: "Let the lifting up of my hands be as the incense." And when the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies he carried that golden censer filled with frankincense, and kindled it with a coal from the brazen altar, and as it kindled the smoke went up in a fragrant cloud; it represented the prayers ascending to God. You are to understand that the prayers are uttered on earth, but this is a picture of their presentation in heaven—the reception accorded these petitions and the responses given, and you must distinguish between the martyr-cry of the last lesson and these prayers here. That martyr-cry was for a single thing—it came from martyrs only. These are the prayers of all God's people continually going up.

Now, seven angels stood, each with a trumpet, prepared to sound just as the high priest, having offered these prayers, poured out on the earth coals of fire from the altar. The first angel sounded (7th verse): "And there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, and a third part of the earth was burned up, and a third part of the trees was burned up, and all the green grass was burned up."

In telling you what I conceive to be the meaning of

these seven trumpets I speak with great diffidence—I will not be as dogmatic about it as I am about some of my interpretations. The wisest men and the greatest scholars on the earth may well differ in interpreting some of the imagery of this wonderful book. I am satisfied in my own mind, however, that I am giving you the true meaning.

In order, then, to get at the meaning of this first trumpet you are to ask: What, or who, was the great enemy in John's time oppressing the church? It was Pagan Rome—that fourth great world-empire that Daniel saw, and that was so terrible. At this particular time, Rome had commenced a world-wide persecution of the Christians; John himself was in exile on account of it, and not a church in the empire was safe from its cruel hands. Now, of course, the Christians prayed about that; they could not help it. And the first trumpet sounded. I understand that first trumpet to mean the judgment upon the Roman Empire—the Pagan Roman Empire—that caused its decline. And this judgment means the invasion of nations from the North: Scandinavia, Germany and beyond the Danube even from the shores of the Baltic—out of their forests came the untamed Germans and Goths, and across the Danube came the Vandals and Huns. Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," shows how the invasion of these hordes from the German forests and across the Danube broke over all the boundaries of the Roman power, and carried their wasting influence with fire and sword into Italy itself. That is the meaning of the first trumpet.

8th verse: "And the second angel sounded, and as it were, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood, and there died a third part of the creatures that were in

the sea, even them that had life, and a third part of the ships were destroyed." Now, a mountain in Revelation means a city, and near to the city of Rome was that great volcano, Vesuvius, whose eruptions, when they poured into the sea, have attracted the attention of the world. Pompeii and Herculaneum, two cities, were buried under one of these eruptions (A.D. 79). So this second trumpet signifies the downfall of the state of Rome itself. The first trumpet prepared for it; the second trumpet strikes at the Roman Empire in its heart and centre. Dr. Lyman Beecher says it took Rome 300 years to die, and Gibbon, as he writes about the decline, writes also about the fall—the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." I shall not attempt here to give the number or order of the irruptions of Northern barbarians that first shattered and then completely wrecked imperial Rome. That empire, according to the prophecy of Daniel, divided into ten kingdoms. But, anyhow, this great civilization that built roads that are good to-day, and walls that stand to-day, and whose iron organization held the whole civilized world in its sway, went down at last because poor women and children and fathers, Christians, prayed.

The third angel sounded, "and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, and it fell upon a third part of the rivers and of the fountains of waters, and the name of the star is called Wormwood; a third part of the waters became wormwood and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter." That word "torch" really means a lamp—"There fell from heaven a great star, burning as a *lamp*." A lamp in this book stands for a church, and hence the meaning of this passage is that one of the luminaries that God intended for enlightening the world became apostate—this is the sym-

bol of the paganized church, which succeeded Rome, and hence after that it was called the "Holy Roman Empire." In a later revelation we will find similar reference (xiii, 3) where, when the Pagan head of the empire was wounded unto death, it was healed by an ecclesiastical head.

You will notice its effect upon the fountains and the rivers, that this apostasy poisoned the sources of life—the very sources of thought and reason and life among the people. The imagery of casting wormwood into water which all must drink is very striking. It reverses the miracle of Moses, who cast a tree into the bitter waters and made them sweet (Exodus xv, 23-25). There was great glorification when Constantine, the Roman Emperor, united the church and state, and gradually the state became subordinate to the church. And when the state perished, the church survived, claiming that it held both ecclesiastical and civil swords. The Pope to-day demands that nations send their ambassadors to him, because of his claim to be a civil as well as ecclesiastical ruler. For quite a while there were many Papal states—that is, states under the Pope, who was as much their ruler as the English King is the ruler over England; Lombardy, Venice, Tuscany, and quite a number of others, and that civil power was exercised more or less until Garibaldi arose, and until Victor Emmanuel established a free church in a free state—that is, he separated the civil from the ecclesiastical power.

The fourth angel sounded, "and a third part of the sun was smitten, and a third part of the moon, and a third part of the stars, and that a third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for a third part of it, and the night in like manner." What does that mean? That following the establishment of

the apostasy of the Romish church, the sources of light were eclipsed and the dark ages followed. Our book commences with luminaries—sun, stars, lamps, appointed to lighten the world. But apostate churches and preachers lose their shining power. Here he is not referring to the material sun, moon and stars—they are symbols. The dark ages, so thoroughly known in history, followed the establishment of the Papacy as a Holy Roman Empire. There were hundreds and thousands of nominal churches and nominal preachers, but the preachers did not preach the gospel, and these so-called churches did not shine; the light that was in them was darkness. The Virgin Mary supplanted Christ, and so the sun of chapter i was darkened. Ordinances were fearfully perverted and sacraments added. The saddest volumes of the annals of time that I read to-day are the volumes that tell about the dark ages following this assumption of power by the Papacy.

I read the 13th verse: "And I saw and heard an eagle"—or as some versions, and better ones, have it, an "angel"—"flying in mid-heaven, saying with a great voice: Woe, Woe, Woe"—that is, three woes—"for them that dwell on the earth by reason of the voice of the trumpet of the three angels that are yet to sound." This is a prelude to the second group—a group of three,—distinguished by a "woe" for each trumpet. It means that when a perverted ecclesiasticism, such as the Papacy was, dominates the world, woes of incalculable horror are sure to follow. So we note the next (ix, 1): "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth"—now, don't read that: "I saw a star *falling* unto the earth," that is not what it says; that star used to belong to heaven, but it was already fallen when seen here. Satan was once called Lucifer—that

means brightness of the morning, and he is so styled in the Old Testament before his fall. He is the fallen star here, and as the church lights are eclipsed through apostasy, so this apostate angel. He will get in a subtle, malicious piece of work here, as we will see, "And there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss"—you might say the key to hell itself—"and he opened the pit of the abyss, and there went up smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun was darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And out of the smoke of the pit came forth locusts upon the earth, and power was given them as scorpions of the earth have power, and it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only"—notice whom they are to hurt—"but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads; and it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months." Any one who has studied the history of the locusts knows that the locust period is five months. But if we follow the numbers of Revelation we will find that every day represents a year. The five months, therefore, would represent about 150 years, though the five months are put in here because they correspond to the locust period. "And their torment was as the torment of scorpions when it striketh a man. And in these days men would seek death but should in no wise find it, and they shall desire to die and death fleeth from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto a horse prepared for war, and upon their heads crowns like unto gold; their faces were as man's face; they had hair as the hair of a woman; their teeth were as the teeth of lions; and they had breastplates, as it were, of iron, and the sound of their wings was as of the sound of chariots of many horses

rushing to war, and they had tails like unto the scorpion and stung, and in their tails was their power to hurt men five months. They had over them as a king the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek Apollyon, which means destroyer"—which also means the devil.

The special points to note here are:

1. This hell-smoke darkened the sun and the air. That is, by darkening the atmosphere, the medium through which sunlight shines on the earth, the sun could not be seen. See account in Genesis i, where the heavenly luminaries, though existing, do not appear until the atmosphere is created. As in this book, the spiritual lights are Christ, the churches and the pastors. Any smoke the devil may send will prevent the earth from being illumined by them.

2. That the haze of this smoke generates tormentors, compared to locusts.

3. That those tormented are not the children of light, but the children of darkness. They hurt not Christians, but torment infidels and atheists.

4. The connection between a corrupt ecclesiasticism and atheism. The latter follows the former as a natural result.

5. The meaning of the locusts. When we were in the Old Testament, in the prophecy of Joel, under the imagery of locusts a great evil was symbolically presented. And in this symbolic language you should not look for real locusts, but what they symbolize. The devil is their king; they come out of hell itself. It is not their purpose to kill men, but to torment them. They are not allowed to torment a Christian, for he has light; but only those who by the smoke are hindered from seeing the light; those that have not the seal of God on their fore-

heads. Whatever these tormentors are, they trouble only infidels and atheists.

Some interpreters have very foolishly construed these locusts to represent the Saracens or Mohammedans, but when the Saracens struck they killed and the chief objects of their vengeance were the Christian nations. They did not seek so much to torment as to kill, and so that interpretation fails to fit the case. What, then, is the thought symbolically presented in this cloud of locusts that torment men who were not Christians? My answer is, a corrupt ecclesiasticism, especially when united with the state, breeds atheism and atheism breeds restlessness and torment. It looses the tiger. The Jews have a proverb: When the tale of brick is doubled then comes Moses. It is also a proverb: Given the ecclesiastical corruption in France—then comes Voltaire. Given Voltaire and then the tiger is loosed. The testimony is abundant that the Romanist hierarchy became corrupt from Pope to priest. Monasteries and nunneries were as cages of unclean birds. In the interest of morality nations suppressed them. See the history of them in England. The priests had no gospel. The churches and cathedrals were full of idolatry. When men go to church to find Christ and see only the Virgin Mary; when preachers are substituted by priests; the gospel exchanged for ritualism; there comes in a revulsion of public sentiment from the Christian religion, embodied in the only form they see it. Infidelity in France, voiced by Voltaire; rationalism in Germany, or in England led by Bolingbroke, Hume, and Taylor, in America by Paine and Ingersoll—all of it is a rebound from corrupt ecclesiasticism. All sacred things become profane; they are without God and hope in the world. Now we are coming to the locusts. Take God away from man—power away from prayer, no church

to visit, no sermons to hear, turned away from all supernaturalism, the ship of life hails from no port and is bound to none, drifts on uncharted seas without helm or compass, at the mercy of winds and tides and sunken reefs; when all standards of authority are lost, when no solution of life's problems can be found in the conflicting vagaries of philosophy—the mind preys on itself. Restlessness and discontent pervade the masses. Then swarm those tormenting locusts of atheism. There were certainly in the dark ages, and even later, periods of awful horror. Maniacs filled the forests. All law was gone. Freebooters, banditti, free companies, roved at their own will and nowhere were peace and safety. It was a time of torment. The devil delighted to torment the very people he had beguiled. He agreed with them that their church was bad, and suggested that they follow him. Such was the first woe.

The author adds: "Behold, there come yet two woes hereafter," but it gives only one of them, as the woe of the seventh trumpet is reserved for the latter part of the book. The 13th verse: "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, and one saying to the sixth angel that had the trumpet: Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month and the year, that they should kill the third part of men. And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them [that means two hundred million]. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and they that sat on them, having breastplates of fire and hyacinth and of brimstone: and the heads of the horses are as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths

proceeded fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three plagues was the third part of man killed, by the fire, and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses was in their mouths, and in their tails, for their tails are like unto serpents and have heads, and with them they hurt. And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons and idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they repented not of their murders and their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

Now, I have twice in my life changed my own mind as to what is symbolized by that great army of horsemen, coming from the Euphrates, from over the east. I once thought that it symbolized the European wars commencing with Napoleon Bonaparte and lasting to the present time. But I do not now think that is right. There was a power in history that did come from the East, and it was an army of cavalry of uncounted numbers, and they did sweep over the fairest part of the earth, and particularly did they strike hard against apostate churches, both the Roman and the Greek Catholics. They were the Saracens. Mohammed, who was the founder of their religion, arose in the sixth century. As it grew in power it swept over all Asia from the Euphrates to Constantinople, captured the Holy Land, all Asia Minor, including the territory of these seven churches, crossed the Bosphorus and the Balkan mountains to thunder at the gate of Vienna. They captured Greece and the eastern Mediterranean islands, captured North Africa, crossed the straits of Gibraltar, and founded a kingdom in Spain, entered France and would have swept all Europe but for

the disastrous defeat at Tours by Charles Martel. Against their strongholds in the Holy Land the Crusades of confederated Europe were broken. It is yet a great power, kindling to-day its fires of war in the Balkans. God used the Mohammedans to strike the apostate Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic churches. These, as I think, were the locusts of the fifth trumpet, the second great woe.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What the general meaning of the trumpets? And what the key-passage disclosing this meaning?
2. Where in tabernacle and temple was the golden altar and what its relation to the brazen altar of sacrifice, and what did incense symbolize?
3. Who the angel with the censer?
4. What great enemy at this time, by cruel and world-wide persecution, was driving Christians to prayer?
5. What, then, probably, the meaning of the first trumpet?
6. In this book what does a mountain symbolize?
7. What natural prodigy in Italy probably suggested the imagery of a volcano overturned in the sea?
8. What is, probably, the meaning of the second trumpet?
9. What the meaning of a torch in viii, 10?
10. When, then, a fallen luminary like a burning lamp, poisons the fountains and rivers, sources of life, making the waters bitter, and causing the death of many—what probably is meant by the third trumpet?
11. What miracle of Moses reversed the thought here?
12. What probably the meaning of the fourth trumpet?
13. What the meaning of the prelude to the second group of trumpets (viii, 13)?
14. Who the fallen star of ix, 1? Cite his Old Testament name and two names here.
15. What effect on the luminaries by this hell-smoke? And how brought about?
16. What then, probably, the locusts?
17. What probably the meaning of the sixth trumpet, and the second woe?

X

THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS
(CONTINUED)

Revelation X and XI

WE have seen under the first trumpet the decline of the Pagan Roman Empire, brought about by the barbaric nations from the German forests and the lower Danube. We have seen under the second trumpet the complete overthrow of Pagan Rome as a volcano is erupted, turned over into the sea. We have seen under the third trumpet the apostasy of the Roman church, resulting in Papal Rome poisoning all the sources of life. We have seen under the fourth trumpet the dark ages resulting from this apostasy, dimming the light of the luminaries appointed to lighten the world. This was the first group of trumpets, four in number.

In the succeeding group of three an emphasis is added —each trumpet is followed by a woe, the second woe worse than the first, and the third to be more direful than the second. The fifth trumpet, we have found, introduces the first woe, which is directly attributed to Satan. Resulting from the apostasy and its corruption comes a revolt against all sacred things, taking the direction of infidelity, rationalism and atheism. Satan's hell-smoke increases the darkness by thickening the atmosphere through which light would shine, breeding restless-

ness of spirit and torment of soul in all who are thus without God and without hope in the world. The torments are compared to locusts with scorpion stings.

Under the sixth trumpet, sounding the second woe, we have seen the rise and conquest of Mohammedan power, sweeping with fire and sword from the Euphrates to Vienna in one direction, and in another direction from northern Africa into Spain and France. For its idolatries and corruptions we have seen the Greek Catholic apostasy lose all its territory to the Saracen, including the Holy Land, Syria, Asia Minor and Constantinople; and the Roman Catholic apostasy smitten in the Mediterranean and in southwestern Europe, and all its crusades hurled back as waves repulsed by a mountain coast. The seven thunders are merely announced, what they mean is sealed up for the present (x, 4), but to be given in a later revelation from a different angle of vision, to wit: the seven plagues inflicted on the apostate church under the symbol of the harlot woman in purple and scarlet (chapters xv and xvi). It is also announced that when the seventh trumpet does sound then will be finished the mystery of the Kingdom of God (x, 7), but before this conclusion is reached the Revelator will answer certain questions, to wit: In all this record of apostasies, and the consequent dark ages and persecutions and judgments on the apostasies, what becomes of the true church and the pure gospel? Does the Spirit dispensation fail? Are all the candlesticks removed? Do all preachers abandon the gospel and become priests of heresy?

The tenth and eleventh chapters answer these questions, and bring us to the glorious triumph of the seventh trumpet, omitting only for the time being the last woe, to be given in chapter xviii, from another synchronous

view. We take up, therefore, the interpretation of these glorious chapters.

"And I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet were as pillars of fire." This evidently, from the description, is the angel of the Covenant, our glorified Lord Himself. "And he had in his hand a little open book." This little book is not the sealed book of v, 1. That was the book of future events concerning the Kingdom. This little book, named again in verses 8 to 10, signifies the restored gospel, which had been shut up by the apostasy.

"And he set his right foot upon the sea and his left upon the earth; and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth, and when he cried the seven thunders uttered their voices, and when the seven thunders uttered their voices I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel that I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heavens and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer."

We note first the posture of the angel—one foot on the land and one on the sea, to signify that all the earth, land and sea, is under his authority. We note second the mere announcement now of the seven thunders, not recorded now, but to be given as the seven vials of wrath in a subsequent vision (chapters xv and xvi). We note third the oath of the angel (verse 6) "that there shall be delay no longer"—the King James Version obscures the meaning of this glorious promise.

The promise directly responds to the martyr-cry of the fifth seal: "How long, O Master, the Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (vi, 10). The answer given them was: "Rest yet for a little time, until thy fellow-servants also, and thy brethren, who shall be killed even as ye were, shall have fulfilled their course"—but now the answer is: "There shall be delay no longer."

The 7th verse further assures, what will be stated more particularly at the end of the eleventh chapter, that the mystery of the Kingdom of God will be finished when the seventh trumpet sounds. We find all that in xi, 15-19.

We must connect with the reply to the martyr-cry in vi, 10, and the different reply here: "There shall be delay no longer," the great lesson in II Peter iii, 3-13. The "little time" of waiting for vengeance is little in God's sight, not ours: "But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Thus in verses 3 to 7, having anticipated for assurance' sake later things, the Revelator resumes the story of the little open book in verses 8 to 11. Let us read them: "And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard it again speaking with me and saying: Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel that standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, saying unto him that he should give me the little book. And he saith unto me: Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up; and it was in my

mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it my belly was made bitter. And they say unto me: Thou must prophesy again over many peoples and tongues and nations and kings."

We repeat that this book differs in important particulars from the book of v, 1. That was sealed—this is open; that was written on both sides—not this one. This one is expressly called the little book, Greek "bibliridion." That book remained in the Revelator's hands—this one is given to John and eaten by him. Being eaten it was sweet; after eaten it was bitter. After eating it he should prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.

Just here I commend again the very able and judicious comments of Dr. Justin A. Smith on this passage, but I give you briefly my own interpretation:

1. The result of the great apostasy was to pervert and shut up the true gospel, until the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was a typical event when Luther found a chained Bible. An ecclesiasticism combining defunct Old Testament elements with many Pagan superstitions offered as a gospel that which was another gospel, and contrary to the true gospel.

2. The little open book, therefore, represents the restored gospel of the Reformation. When Victor Emmanuel entered Rome, breaking down the civil power of the Pope, he carried at the head of his army an open Bible, that Rome had not known for centuries.

3. When that restored gospel is eaten, appropriated and assimilated by faith, a new era of missions to many new nations would dawn. An open Bible in the hands of the people scatters the superstitious rubbish of the false ecclesiasticism and propagation of the recovered gospel extends to earth's remotest bounds. The idea of x, 11,

is thus repeated in a subsequent vision (xiv, 6): "And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim to them that dwell on the earth; and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people." It is a noticeable fact that missionary operations commenced with the rescue of the Bible; it was translated into the tongues of the people, and preachers began to carry it to the ends of the earth, and ever since that day missions to all nations have taken colossal strides.

Having thus in the tenth chapter seen the restored gospel, we consider in the eleventh chapter the questions: What about the true church in the dark ages of the apostasy? Measured by man, the church in the West, that is, in Europe, is the Roman Catholic apostasy; and the church in the East is the Greek Catholic apostasy, and man will tell you that within that time there were no other churches. Your average church historian will tell you that. But we will let God answer that question (chapter xi, 1): "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Under this unique measurement only the true temple with its altar of sacrifice and its few worshippers are counted. The outer court and all the holy city are left out. These are trodden under foot by the nations forty-two months, which equals one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the next verse. And in this book a prophetic day represents a year; as in its Old Testament analogue, Ezekiel. The forty-two months and their equivalent, 1260 days, symbolizing 1260 years, date the dark ages of the apostasy—beginning in the

third century and extending to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The true church in this period is an inner circle determined by divine spiritual measurement. When in Zechariah a young man attempts to measure the poor little Jerusalem of the restoration, a voice from heaven says: "Stop that young man," and announces that Jerusalem shall become immeasurable, overflowing into the villages and country round about, a forecast of the Jerusalem in Revelation xxi, xxii.

Now let us read again: "And I will give unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth." Note that during all this dark period of 1260 years, two witnesses never cease to testify, though in sackcloth. Their testimony is costly to them—it is testimony as at a funeral, mourning for the apostasy of Zion, and for the slain of the true people of God.

Here the important question arises: Who these witnesses? The Old Testament analogue, in the third and fourth chapters of Zechariah, suggests the clue to the right answer. In the dark ages when Israel was restored after exile in Babylon, there were two anointed witnesses accused of the devil, despised of men—namely, Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the civil ruler. In themselves was no power. Considering the mountain of difficulty which obstructed their work they were contemptible agencies of success. But considering the divine help, it was said: "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting: Grace, Grace unto it." Truly in that case it was "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord

of Hosts." So in this case, as in that case, are two witnesses, but the question recurs: Who are they in this case? My answer is that the key-passage of this book, i, 12-16, tells us plainly: "The candlestick and the star are the light-bearers"—i.e., the church and the preacher; they are the lower lights to illumine the world. The gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ's church: the testimony of true ministers shall never cease. It has always been a surprise to me that commentators should be in doubt about these two witnesses. The true church and the true minister should testify in sackcloth for 1260 years. They should be in mourning for the apostasy, for the slain of its persecution.

In the next synchronous vision, the true church symbolized as a glorious woman of xii, 1, shall be driven into the wilderness, hidden but not lost, for this precise period—1260 years (xii, 6). The power ascribed to these two witnesses is set forth under the imagery of verses 5 and 6: "And if any man desire to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man desire to hurt them in this manner must he be killed. These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire." This imagery applies to their use of the conquering word of God in denouncing judgment on their enemies, or else in the power of their prayers, as in the case of Elijah shutting up the heavens that it rain not.

Again counting a day for a year, we will see in what I soon quote that for three and a half days (or three and a half years), both of these witnesses seemed to be dead: "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the

beast that cometh out of the abyss [beast always signifies government, and the abyss signifies that it is a hell-government, and we will find all about it in chapter xvii] shall make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. And their bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb [note that]. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them and make merry; and they shall send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth."

That faithful churches—and faithful preachers—would point out their sins, cry out against their backsliding, was a torment to the apostasy through all the 1260 years. "And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that beheld them."

We may well ask just here what event of history corresponds to this prophecy. Here I cannot do better than to cite a remarkable passage from Dr. Justin A. Smith's commentary:

"No purpose of God, as regards the gospel of man's salvation, fails. He permits to His gospel a fiery ordeal, extending through many centuries. But at the fit time He appears again in its behalf, and through chosen instruments causes it to be once more declared, as here represented in the little book, in primeval simplicity, and in a ministry that bears it 'to all the world.' By what appears in the eleventh chapter, we are given to understand that while the outer court of the symbolical temple,

and the city itself, are trodden under foot by the enemies of God and truth and righteousness, the inner sanctuary is kept safe; in other words, there survives, in the very worst of times, a faithful remnant by whom an undesecrated altar is preserved, a true worship offered, and that truth which embodies the substance of ancient types maintained. These are the witnesses. The voice of a true testimony in God's behalf does not die out of the world, even when persecution rages most hotly; nor is it holy ground even when the world's loud tumult is at its worst. These witnesses do, indeed, testify—'prophesy'—'in sackcloth'—the garment of distress and mourning. Such of the Lord's true people as survive in such times are a hunted flock. The truth itself is under reproach, the deriding voices rave against it. The true church and its ordinances are, in the world's esteem, placed in humiliating contrast with the shows and splendours of that apostasy which for the time is supreme, while everything beautiful and sacred and beneficent in Christianity is as if clad in sackcloth of humiliation, and lamenting, in the language of the ancient prophet, that there are none to stand upon the Lord's side. And there comes a time when the triumph of evil seems complete. It is the deeper gloom that precedes the dawn. All the powers of darkness triumph. The murderers of the witnesses rejoice over them and make merry, and send gifts one to another. But the triumph is brief. Just at this crisis God appears for His truth and His people. The slain witnesses stand upon their feet. They rise into vigour of life like the glory that shone in the person and face of the risen Lord. Their enemies behold them with consternation, and the triumph which now comes to them in turn is like the Lord's own ascension to heaven in a cloud, receiving all power in

heaven and in earth. Effects follow which show how truly divine is that intervention. The hostile power shakes, as when earthquakes rock the globe, while the great and wicked city, in whose streets the slain witnesses have lain, feels the shock.

"This is, in general, the picture sketched for us in the striking symbolism of this chapter. If we have read this symbolism right, there can be, it would seem, only one answer to the question where the historical counterpart shall be sought. There is one point of crisis in modern times which fulfils in a remarkable degree the conditions of an adequate historical parallel to the Apocalyptic picture here sketched. Not as fulfilments of the prophecy in exact detail, but as indicating some general aspects of the period as having this significance, we note the following:

"In A.D. 1512-17, a council was held in Rome, called from the place of its assembly—the Church of St. John Lateran—the Fifth Lateran Council. At the eighth session of this council, held in December, 1513, a papal bull was issued, in which was a summons to all dissidents from the papal authority to appear before the council at its next session, in the following May, and to show cause for their continued refusal to acknowledge the Pope's supremacy. When the Council came together in that session, May 5, 1514, no answer appeared to this summons. Not that there were no longer those in Christendom who refused allegiance to the usurped authority of Rome, nor because any one could have imagined that opportunity for a free protest before the Council would have been allowed; not because, joined with the impossibility of a response under such conditions, it was a fact that just at that time there actually was no one ready, like the Wickliffe and the Huss of a former age, or the

Luther who was soon to appear, to give a voice to the spirit of revolt against Rome, which, though widely prevalent, was for the most part nursed in secret. 'Throughout the length and breadth of Christendom,' says Elliott—and his words are true in the sense just explained—'Christ's witnessing servants were silenced' —they appeared as dead. The orator of the session ascended the pulpit, and, amidst the applause of the assembled Council, uttered that memorable exclamation of triumph—an exclamation which, notwithstanding the long multiplied anti-heretical decrees of popes and councils, notwithstanding the more multiplied anti-heretical crusade and inquisitorial fires, was never, I believe, pronounced before, and certainly never since: '*Jam nemo reclamat, nullus obsistit!*'—'There is an end of resistance to the papal rule and religion; opposers exist no more!' And again, 'The whole body of Christendom is now seen to be subjected to its head, that is, to *thee*.' Three years and a half later, October 31, 1517, Luther nailed his theses to the Wittenberg church door!

"It is undoubtedly true that for some time previous to the meeting of this Fifth Lateran Council, as described, the murderers of God's people had been especially active, with results of intimidation and the apparent silencing of dissent and protest highly gratifying to the hierarchy. The crusaders against the Albigenses and Waldenses had well-nigh extirpated those troublesome heretics. The measures of the Inquisition in various parts of Europe had succeeded to the utmost wish of those by whom they were carried on. A threatening schism in the papal body itself was healed during the session of this Council. So fully, in view of all, did the members of the Council sympathize in the exultant confidence of their orator that upon the final adjournment they celebrated the triumph

which Popery seemed to have achieved in a feast, whose splendour had never in Rome been equalled. It was like the rejoicing, the merry-making and the sending of gifts of which our prophecy speaks. It is also matter of history that in that same Council there was an emphatic reaffirmation of the long-standing papal law that the bodies of heretics should be denied all rights of Christian burial; so that here, also, we find almost literal fulfilment of the words: 'Do not suffer their bodies to be put in graves.' These conspicuous examples of the application of this law in the exhuming and burning of the bones of Wickliffe, at an earlier date, by command of the Council of Constance, and the direction given by the same Council that the ashes of Huss should be cast into the Lake of Constance, are familiar facts. It may be added that in like manner the ashes of Savonarola were thrown into the Arno, and that it was common for the papal bulls to ordain that the heretics against whom they were fulminated should not only be put to death, but should be denied Christian burial."

Just three and a half years from that time all Europe was ablaze with the Reformation, and the Romanist power has never recovered from the shock it received.

Three things are said in our lesson of the effect of the revival of the witnesses:

1. "Great fear fell on all those who saw the revival" —which means that all the Romanist hierarchy trembled when the Reformation fires began to break out in so many places and among so many peoples of Europe.

2. The Romanist hierarchy heard the voice calling the witnesses up to heaven (xi, 12). Heaven here is not the final abode of the blest, but the apocalyptic heaven, the scene of the vision, and means simply that their ene-

mies witnessed honour and open exaltation conferred of God on these long despised witnesses.

3. Chapter xi, 13, means the convulsions which followed the Reformation in which Rome lost and Protestantism won most of France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, England and Scotland.

We come now to the last of the chapter:

The Seventh Angel Sounds

Having thus disposed of the question: What about the true gospel and what about the true church during the dark ages, the last angel will sound, and will omit only the last woe, we will get to that in the eighteenth chapter, and we will see that woe as it strikes the Papacy.

"And the seventh angel sounded: and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said: The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders [representing the eternal priesthood of Christ's people], who sat before God on their throne, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying: We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast, because thou hast taken thy great power and didst reign. And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give thy rewards to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy them that destroy the earth. And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven, and there was seen in this temple the ark of the covenant, and there followed lightnings and voices and thunders, and an earthquake, and a great hail."

I showed you that the seals gave one panoramic view

of the gospel as preached to the end of time, and that the trumpets gave you another panoramic view parallel with it, of the gospel as prayed to the end of time, and so this passage here: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ," shows that the recovered gospel in the Reformation times will never be silenced any more—Rome will never be able to shut again that open book; she will never be able to chain that Bible again; she will never be able to stop the onward march of missions that is to-day reaching the utmost parts of the world, and I would very solemnly impress upon you that it is the Spirit dispensation, and the dispensation of a true church, and the dispensation of a true ministry that will bring about this glorious consummation, which will be more fully discussed when we come to the Millennium in the twentieth chapter of this book. I want to make this very impressive, because when you talk missions you must talk in faith of their triumph. It is the open restored gospel, and under its power you must preach confidently to any nation, to any king, to any people, and your heart must be assured that by this gospel preached, will every man be saved that is ever to be saved in this world. I will tell you that that is one of the key-passages in Revelation: "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ." The candlesticks were lighted to illumine the world, and though when in chapters ii and iii we showed the pitiful imperfections of the churches, we wondered if such instrumentalities could ever enlighten the world, and when we saw the deficiencies of the preachers, we wondered if by men like these the kingdom of this world should ever become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; yet when we saw the heavens opened and what powers were employed

there to help the churches and preachers, we no longer wondered. As they preached they conquered; as they prayed they conquered; stricken down as if dead, they revived again and the fire broke out into a greater blaze, and was more widely spread than before. That is the crowd I belong to.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Give briefly a review of the seals and trumpets, and then tell what questions chapter x answers, and what other questions chapter xi answers.
2. Who the radiant angel of x, 1?
3. The meaning of his posture—one foot on the sea and the other on the land?
4. Why the temporary sealing up of the voices of the seven thunders? When and how do they reappear and find record? Where and for similar reasons have we found a temporary silence in a preceding section?
5. State the oath of the angel as wrongly rendered in the common version, and then as better rendered in the Standard Version.
6. (a) To what previous question is the oath a final answer, and (b) compare it with the answer then given, and (c) with what parable is it in agreement, and (d) give Peter's reason for the delay, and (e) why does this delay seem long to us and only "a little while" to God?
7. Discriminate between the book of v, 1, and the book of x, 2, and then (a) tell what this book means, (b) the meaning of eating it, and (c) explain its application to x, 11.
8. What is measured in xi, 1-2, and what does it mean?
9. (a) In the Old Testament are two measurements somewhat similar to the one in xi, 1-2—where are they, and (b) where in this book another one? (c) Explain their relation to each other, and (d) what the meaning of this one?
10. (a) How long will this small measure last, and (b) explain the symbolic numbers, 42 months (xi, 2), 1260 days (xi, 8), and by comparison of xi, 2-3, with xii, 6, prove that "temple" in xi, 1, and the woman in xii, 1, mean the same thing.
11. (a) What the Old Testament analogue of xi, 3-4, and (b) the two witnesses there, and (c) who the two witnesses here?
12. Meaning of "prophesying in sackcloth"?
13. Give the historic fulfilment of the death and revival of the witnesses and all the attendant circumstances of xi, 7-11.
14. What the meaning of xi, 12?

15. What historical correspondence to xi, 13, showing the effect of the revival of the witnesses?
16. Where will we find the third woe named but not given in xi, 14?
17. What glorious consummation follows the seventh trumpet, and what parallel in the last synchronous view?

XI

PROPHETIC FORECASTS OF CHURCH HISTORY

Revelation XII

THIS is by far the longest section in the book, extending from xii, 1, to xix, 10. Its interpretation will call for several chapters. It will be, or at least has proved to be, exceedingly difficult of interpretation, and before attempting the detailed exposition we must first consider the general purpose of the whole section. The entire section gives a prophetic forecast of the history of two opposing religious institutions. Each institution is symbolized by a woman who glides into a city; that is, the symbol changes from a woman to a city. The idea, as elsewhere throughout the book, comes from the Old Testament imagery, the general convocation of ancient Israel as represented by the prophets is a woman betrothed to Jehovah. Marital infidelity, or harlotry, on the part of this woman is defined to be a turning away from Jehovah to worship idols. That is, spiritual fornication means idolatry. Paul in a measure adopts this imagery in his letter to the Galatians (iv, 21-31), where in the form of an allegory he makes Hagar and Sarah represent the two covenants: Hagar, the bondwoman, answering to the earthly Jerusalem, and Sarah, the true wife, answering to the heavenly Jerusalem.

We need not be surprised, therefore, to find in this symbolical, apocalyptic prophecy two women representing two opposing institutions, nor to find each woman, by a change of figure, becoming a city. Nor need we to stumble in the exposition if, bearing in mind the law of interpreting symbols, we be careful not to construe a symbol literally. A symbolic woman is not a real woman. As there was a real Hagar and a real Sarah, so there is some historical background which will be the analogue of every symbol in this book. For example, there was the historic Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, who led Israel to worship idols, else there would be no force in calling the temptress Jezebel who led the church at Thyatira astray in idolatry.

Let us, therefore, look at the two women in this section. The first is thus described: "And a great sign was seen in heaven, a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head was a crown of twelve stars"—heaven here must not be understood as the final abode of the blest, but is the scene of the vision. The word "sign" (Greek "semeion") is further proof that the woman is not real. "Woman" symbolizes the church as an institution. "Arrayed with the sun" means that Christ is her light. The "moon under her feet" means that the Christ light is not direct but reflected, as the moon shines when the sun is absent. Note that her crown is not a symbol of sovereignty. It is a garland given as a reward to victors—Greek "stephanos," not "diadema," a diadem worn by sovereigns. The twelve stars probably allude to the twelve apostles, in a teaching sense the foundation, as the twelve foundations of the Holy City (xxi, 14), which itself helps to prove that the woman is the church—she radiating with Christ's light and the light of the apostles. In the second chap-

ter of Ephesians we have the thought somewhat expressed (20th verse): "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." This woman, then, stands before us as pre-eminently a light-bearer—of the light of Christ, of the light of the Apostles and the New Testament prophets. The fact that she has a garland on her head rather than a crown shows that when she appears she has won a victory. The picture reminds us of the description of the woman in Solomon's song (vi, 10): "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?" That is the woman.

The second woman is thus described (xvii, 1-6): "And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication; and he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, and upon her forehead a name written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her I wondered with a great wonder."

The explanation of the terms here will be given when we reach the seventeenth chapter.

Did you ever see two pictures standing over against each other more in contrast than these two? Now, the question is: who are these women? Is either one of them a real woman, and when the second one glides into a city called Babylon is it the real Babylon which in ancient times led Israel into captivity? When the first one, now only betrothed to Christ, becomes the wife of the Lamb at the close of this section (xix, 7, 8), can we, with the Romanists, interpret this wife of the Lamb to be His mother, the Virgin Mary, and worship her as the Queen of Heaven? And when later this wife, by a change of figure, becomes a city, Jerusalem (xxi, 9-12), shall we call it the earthly Jerusalem?

We are safe, therefore, in a general interpretation that the first woman represents the true church of Christ as an institution, and that the second woman represents the apostate church as an institution, originated by Satan to counterfeit the true. In our chapter on Matthew xvi and xviii, where Christ says: "On this rock I will build my church," we have already learned that the term church may be used abstractly if considered as an institution, or concretely when applied to a particular congregation, or prospectively when it is applied to the future church in glory. In chapter xii, under the symbol of a radiant woman, the church is represented as an institution. I read the second verse: "And she was with child, and she crieth out travailing in birth and in pain to be delivered." This spiritual travail is a familiar figure of speech in both Testaments. For example, Isaiah, foreseeing the regeneration or new birth of the Jewish nation in one day, says: "Who hath heard of such a thing—who hath ever seen such a thing? Shall a land be born

in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth at once? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." Now, the church is represented as being in travail to bring forth children; as when in a revival meeting we say: This church, this Zion, must travail in order that new converts may be born unto God.

Continuing the quotation (verse 31): "And there was seen another sign in heaven, and behold! a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems"—not "stephanos," a garland, but diadems, the symbols of authority. What is the meaning of this great red dragon? A horrible thing as seen in that vision. What does it mean? Your 9th verse tells you exactly: "The old serpent, he that is called the devil, Satan, the deceiver of the world." That is what that sign represents. What is meant by "having seven heads"? That refers us to his diverse sources of vitality, and his persistence in life after it seems you have killed him—seven being the symbolic number of perfection or fulness. You have heard that a cat has nine lives; well, the symbolic seven means more than nine—means any number of heads, any number of seats of intelligences, diverse forms of intelligence, diverse forms of vitality, diverse capacity of biting and striking. Just here those of you who have studied the classics will recall the famous battle between Hercules and Hydra. Hydra was the many-headed snake. You have little trouble in killing a snake with one head; with stick or stone you crush that one head. But suppose that when you strike at one head, the one you see, the other six in ambush strike at you.

The devil struck with three heads of temptation at Christ in the wilderness—and each in succession was

crushed. But the record says the devil left Him for a little while; he came back again—he had another way to try Him; he came back at Him in another form. He will the same way approach you. You need not think, because you have overcome the evil one in one form, that you have won a final victory. He takes as many shapes as Proteus, he has as many heads as Hydra, as many hands as Briareus, as many eyes as Argus, and he always falls on his feet.

What is meant by diadem? It means that it is unlike that woman's garland who had no sovereignty. The woman is not sovereign, for Christ is the Sovereign. But the devil is a real king; he is the king of the pit; he was the king of that swarm of locusts we talked about; he is the king of all the fallen angels; he is the prince of the world. As Paul says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers"; he is the prince of this world.

What is meant by his ten horns? Always in this book a horn is a symbol of power, and ten is one of the prophetic numbers to represent any number of powers. The unicorn mentioned in the Bible, which I suppose is the one-horned rhinoceros, has only one horn, and if you can get away from that one horn, you are all right for a while; if a wild bull comes after you he can gore you with only two horns; but the devil can hook you in any direction. The ten horns represent the diversity and multitude of his powers.

We will read again (4th verse): "And his tail draweth a third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth." The tail here is but carrying out the idea of a dragon. Every serpent has a tail, and many of the crocodile class have their greatest power in their tails. If you are walking along a Louisiana bayou, thinking you

are passing an old rotten log, which is an alligator, he will knock you into the water with his tail and then go in after you and devour you. Now, while the tail is an essential part of a reptile, it symbolizes here the pagan power he will use against the church. The stars drawn by the tail represent the pastors he leads astray by fear of persecution, by immorality, or heresy. Note the tense "draweth," not "has drawn," which by anticipation shows how in the conflict with the woman he will try to destroy her by corrupting her ministry. The "third part" signifies that in this particular conflict he will only partially succeed in corrupting the ministry. The majority will remain faithful. It is an outrage on interpretation to make the stars here refer to the fallen angels who were seduced by Satan before Adam was created. That is indeed the historic background which furnishes the imagery of this future event—see Jude 6 and II Peter ii, 4.

I therefore repeat the question: Who are the stars? In this book they are preachers, and it means that in the coming persecution a relatively large number of preachers will fall. Walking carelessly along the bayou of sin they have been knocked by the tail of this alligator into its mouth. Henceforward they become preachers of the devil rather than of Jesus Christ. I once saw a preacher as drunk as a fool; a bystander said: "He is so drunk he could not hit the ground with his hat." A friend also standing by me, who was a student of this book, said: "The alligator's tail has drawn down that star—he has that preacher." What an awful thing when one commissioned of heaven to outshine the real stars shall fall from his high estate and become a servant of the devil rather than a leader of the hosts of the true God. Whenever a preacher tells lies, whenever he is two-faced

and double-tongued, whenever he is a strife maker and not a peace maker, the devil's tail has hit him.

We continue to read: "And the dragon sitteth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child. And she was delivered of a son, a man-child, who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and the child was caught up to God unto his throne." The devil got that child's body; when you see the woman a little later the child is not with her. But the devil did not get the soul—that was caught up to heaven. But he did destroy the body of that child and thought he was winning a great fight. Now, the question is: Who is that man-child? In the verse I have just read it states that he is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, and here the child was caught up unto His throne. On that statement Alford and nearly all commentators say that the child was Jesus Christ, and that it could not possibly apply to anybody else. If that be true, I would like to ask Mr. Alford who then is this woman, the mother of the child. Some commentators try to get out of that difficulty by saying that the woman is indeed the church, but that the church here is an Old Testament church, continued in the New Testament, and about equivalent to the Kingdom. I fail to see how the Kingdom gives birth to its founder, and totally dissent from such a mixed interpretation of the word "church." When Jesus said, "I will build my church . . ." He had before Him the Old Testament Jewish church, the convocation of national Israel, and He had before Him the Greek church, the civil body governing in every city, yet in contradiction to both of them He says, "I will build *my* church," and if this woman represents the church, she represents the New Testament church, not a mixed Old Testament and New Testament church.

Moreover, this whole vision is a part of the things "that shall come to pass hereafter," and we are now in that section of Revelation. We have seen the things that John "saw," we have seen the things "that are" in the seven churches on earth and the things "that are" in heaven, but ever since that we have been in the things that shall take place hereafter. Whoever this man-child is, he was not born before or in John's time, and the fact that he is to be caught up to the throne of God and rule the nations with a rod of iron cannot necessarily prove that it was Jesus Christ, for in this very book, and in the parts we have gone over, Christ said: "To him that overcometh will I give to sit down on my throne, and I will give him authority over nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." Therefore, it is not at all necessary to violate the symbolism by making this child to mean Jesus Christ, born away back yonder in the past from John's time, nor to make this woman represent something that existed away back yonder in the Old Testament. In John's time the church as an institution seems beaten by her adversaries. John is cheered by a vision of this apparently beaten institution, crowned with a garland of victory and radiant with light. When John writes he is under the persecution of Domitian, a very discouraging time, and the church as an institution does not seem to be in a prosperous condition. But he sees in the future ahead of him this glorious church about to be marvellously prosperous. She wears the garland of victory. The church goes on conquering and to conquer up to the time of the Emperor Decius, A.D. 248, when, according to Gibbon, the greatest persecution ever known to history, or that paganism ever waged against the church, was in his administration. The church, from John's time, wears the garland wreath of victory on her

brow up to the time of the Decian persecution. The dragon in that persecution devours her converts and drives her into the wilderness. It is true that the history in Matthew ii, 13-16, when the devil through Herod seeks the life of the child Jesus, is the historic background suggesting the imagery of this vision of a future event. And it is true that after His crucifixion our Lord ascended to a heavenly throne, but

Who, then, is the man-child? My answer is that *one is taken to represent a class,* that is, the man-child represents the martyrs that are to be put to death in this coming persecution. They are converts just as you are.

The 17th verse says: "And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed that keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus Christ." He did not succeed with that first seed, but purposes to assail the rest of them and by a new kind of power—he will use different means, as we will see in the next lesson. The head he is using right now in devouring the converts is the Pagan persecution of Decius.

Now, as a further proof that I am right in saying this man-child represents a whole class, later on in the chapter (verse 11), he is spoken of as plural: "And *they* overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death." Now, all of verse 7 to verse 11 is parenthetical and epexegetical of the killing of the man-child. It is a parenthesis. For instance, in the third chapter of John we have: "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God," and further down in the chapter we have: "Except a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." That second statement is epexegetical of

the first one. That is, it elaborates by giving the constituent elements of the new birth—cleansing by application of Christ's blood and renewing of mind by the Holy Spirit.

I want you to reflect most solemnly upon my position, taken by no commentary in the world, and on the correctness of which I will risk my reputation: that from verse 7 to 11 the whole paragraph is parenthetical, and is simply explanatory of the devouring of the man-child. As soon as that parenthesis is interposed, you go right on about the woman in the wilderness; you resume the story that was interrupted by the parenthesis.

How, then, does the devil propose to destroy the converts of the church? In this verse you see a class represented by a man-child—the class of the martyrs that you saw in the fifth seal of the preceding lecture—how does he propose to devour that man-child? By using a Pagan government to kill them in various ways: cut their heads off, burn them at the stake, destroy them root and branch. He lost the fight, though he thought he had won it. He lost the fight because the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Wickliffe's ashes were cast into the river Severn after his body was burned. They cast his ashes into the river, but the river carried them to the sea, and the sea carried them around the shores of the world, and so Wickliffe's soul goes marching on. You will see in the next chapter how the devil will employ a more formidable means of persecution. You cannot understand the next lesson unless you note this change: his first means to destroy the churches was to put their members to death by persecution of Pagan Rome. His next expedient will be Papal Rome.

Let us now expound that parenthesis—I have told you that verses 7 to 11 is a parenthesis explanatory of the

devouring of that child. There was war in heaven (whenever the devil seeks to destroy the saints, that always means war). Michael and his angels go forth to war with the dragon and his angels, and they prevail not. The man-child was killed, but Satan prevailed not—the martyr testimony makes other seed. The old serpent was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

"And I heard a great voice in heaven saying: Now is come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of God, and the authority of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuses them before God day and night, and they [see the plural of that man-child] overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their life even unto death." John Milton takes "the heaven" here to mean the home of God and not the scene of this symbolic vision, and, forgetting that this imagery foretells a thing to occur in the future, made this war in heaven take place before the world was created—a real fight between the good and the bad angels. The finest part of his "Paradise Lost" is his description of the war between the angels. Just what means were employed in expelling the fallen angels originally I do not know, but Michael here is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself; his angels are the angels we saw in chapter iv—ten thousand times ten thousand of thousands, and they are helping the church here on earth. The devil is trying to destroy the church, and he has the power to kill their bodies, but not their souls, and God's angels from heaven help the saints in their fight to stand firm and shout and sing and pray as they die, so that their martyr testimony will be more powerful in making new converts to God than if they had not been martyred.

Now, as I said, the devil got the bodies of the martyrs, but not their souls, and he lost the fight.

Let us see what becomes of the woman. The 6th verse says that the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, where she remained a thousand two hundred and threescore days, each day a year. That is the same as forty-two symbolic months. Note again particularly that verses 14-17 are epexegetical of verse 6. It says that she was given the two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness. The great eagle here is one of the Cherubim. We know that every Cherub had one eagle face. This statement recalls two Old Testament passages: God says to Moses: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." And again we have these glorious words: "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not; neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah xl, 28-31). Cherubim, eagle-faced, bore the woman into the wilderness, where she was nourished for twelve hundred and sixty years.

The 15th verse: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away with the stream." That is a familiar Old Testament image, where great wrath is compared to a flushed river, an overflowing torrent. The record says the earth helped the woman by swallowing up the water.

Imagine what would become of a river turned loose in a desert. It would soon vanish. But what it means by the earth helping the woman is that secular governments sometimes intervene to protect the rights of the saints and of the churches. For instance, in the Catholic part of Germany it was easy to destroy a martyr, but they could not get to him over in the Protestant part of Germany. The earth over there helped the woman. The Saxon king would say: "You cannot persecute here." Like the grim old Black Douglas, when he started to the borders of England and Scotland to defend the frontier, and the Catholic church was just starting a persecution, said: "I go, but the smell of one burning fagot on the Tay will bring me back from the borders." That is the earth helping the woman. "And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and he went away to make war with the rest of her seed, those that keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What the extent of this section?
2. What part of it our present lesson?
3. What the general purpose of the whole section?
4. Whence the imagery?
5. Cite Paul's use of similar imagery.
6. What the first law of interpreting symbols? Illustrate.
7. What the description of the first woman?
8. Explain separately the words: "sign," "heaven," "woman," "arrayed with the sun," "the moon under her feet," "crown," "twelve stars."
9. What Old Testament passage does this vision recall?
10. Where and what the description of the second woman?
11. What does she represent, who established, and why?
12. What uses of the word "church" were given in the lecture on Matthew xvi, 18?
13. Explain xii, 2—"the woman in travail," and cite illustration from Isaiah.
14. Verse 3: (a) Who the dragon; (b) meaning of seven heads, and cite classic allusion; (c) meaning of "diadem" —Greek "diadema"—and distinguish between it and the

woman's crown "stephanos," and prove his real sovereignty; (d) meaning of ten horns?

15. Verse 4: (a) Meaning of Tail; (b) illustrate the power and use of the tail of a certain class of reptiles; (c) the symbolic meaning of tail in this connection; (d) meaning of stars here; (e) prove that the drawing down of these stars is not a past event.

16. Verse 5: (a) What the historic analogue which suggests the imagery of this future event; (b) what part of the verse led Alford and most other commentators to make this man-child our Lord Himself; (c) what preceding passages in this book disprove the necessity of confining the application to our Lord; (d) what the difficulty of referring the passage to our Lord; (e) how do some commentators seek to evade this difficulty, and your reply to them; (f) who the man-child and the proof?

17. What great poet misinterpreted the war of verse 7?

18. What this war? And wherein does Satan fail?

19. What verses of the chapter are epexegetical of verse 6?

20. What the Old Testament analogue of the church in the wilderness?

21. Who bore the woman in the wilderness, and what two Old Testament passages are recalled?

22. To what the outgoings of Satan's wrath against the woman compared?

23. Literally, what becomes of a river in the desert?

24. Symbolically, what is meant by "the earth helped the woman," and illustrate?

XII

PROPHETIC FORECASTS (CONTINUED)

Revelation XIII

IN the preceding chapter, commencing the exposition of this section, we considered only chapter xii. A brief review of the leading lines of thought on that chapter will help us now to see clearly its connection with our present study, chapter xiii.

We found the radiant woman of xii, 1, to be the true church established by our Lord, in the sense of *an institution,* appointed to enlighten the world. We found the adversary of this institution to be the devil, *de facto* (not *de jure*) king of this world and prince of all powers of darkness. We found that the war he waged against the church consisted of three distinct campaigns:

1. An assault on the pastors, in which "his tail draweth down a third part of the stars"—i.e., a great proportion of the pastors were led astray into either heresy or a corrupt life, Satan counting that as are the pastors so will be the churches. In this campaign, Satan is defeated because he could not corrupt all the preachers; the majority remained faithful to the Lord.

2. An assault by persecution unto death on the progeny of the church, i.e., her true spiritual children (xii, 5), the man-child meaning not a particular person, but standing for the martyr class in that greatest of all Pagan persecutions in the first half of the third century; a class and

not a single person being evident from the more elaborate statement in verse 11, "And *they* overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their life, even unto death." In this terrible conflict the heavenly powers, Christ and His holy angels, assisted the martyrs against Satan and his demons assisted the persecutor Pagan Rome (xii, 7). In this campaign Satan was defeated, for he could kill the body only but not the soul (latter clause of verse 5), and because "the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church."

3. His attempt to destroy the church *as an institution* by world-wide proscriptive legislation, making its assemblings a capital penal offence—notably by the Roman Catholic Emperor Decius and his successor in first half of third century. In this campaign he was also defeated because, although the church was driven into the obscurity of the wilderness, even there she was divinely kept alive and nourished (verses 6, 13, 14), and children of faith were born unto her there. Even some secular powers defended the persecuted institutions against the swollen river of his wrath, "the earth helped the woman" (verses 15, 16), and so always when the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. (See Isaiah lix, 19.)

Failing to destroy the church by a partial corruption of the ministry, failing to destroy it by martyring its children of faith, since the martyrs' dying testimony made other believers, failing to destroy the church as an institution by making its assemblies a penal offence under imperial Pagan law, the wrath of Satan was exceedingly great and his purpose confirmed to wage war against her other seed, i.e., wilderness seed, but by

employing a different expedient, just what, this lesson, chapter xiii, will disclose.

To further clarify this brief review of Chapter XI, these additional observations are submitted, though but repetitions:

1. While conceding and even insisting that there was a fall of the angels, led by Satan, before man was created (Jude 6 and II Peter ii, 4), this interpretation of "things to come to pass hereafter," i.e., after John's time, A.D. 96, has no other allusion to that ancient event than this, that all of his visions of the future are clothed in the imagery of past historical events. Hence these "stars" drawn down by the dragon's tail (verse 4) mean not the fallen angels seduced by him before Adam was created, but mean fallen pastors seduced by him in this conflict with the church, following our interpretation of the first chapter of this book. And so the war in xii, 7, was not, as Milton interpreted it in his "Paradise," the war which resulted in casting down Satan and his demons before Adam's creation, as verse 11 of that context shows. But as there is an historical background which furnishes the drapery of every vision of the future, poetic license may extenuate, if not justify, Milton's misinterpretation. Just so, when the seventy returned with joy, saying "Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name," and the Lord replies, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke x, 17, 18), He does not refer to Satan's original fall, but to his fall through the testimony of the seventy. So here he falls from his usurped place by the testimony of the martyrs (verse 11). You have only to compare the great lesson in Matthew xii, 28, 29, where our Lord casts out Satan and spoils him of his goods, referring not to Satan's original overthrow, but to his overthrow from his place of usurpation.

2. Similarly we have not followed Alford and most commentators in making the man-child (verse 5) mean our Lord Himself. We can see how Romanists would enjoy this, since it would make the radiant woman of xii, 1, to be the Virgin Mary and Queen of Heaven. The way Satan sought to destroy our Lord when a child, through Herod's massacre at Bethlehem, is indeed the historic analogue which suggests the imagery of this vision of a future event. The authority given to this "man-child" in latter clause of verse 5, need not stagger us when we consider the promises already expounded at ii, 26, 27; iii, 21, and many later passages in this book. Nor have we accepted the weak evasions of other commentators, who, to avoid a difficulty, make the woman of xii, 1, mean the church, but a blended Old and New Testament church, so as to permit our Lord to be born of the church. There is no such church. And our Lord is the founder and head of the church, not its son.

3. Our interpretation makes 7-12 epexegetical of the war on the man-child, latter clause of verse 4 and verse 5; and verses 13-17 epexegetical of verse 6.

4. Our interpretation makes the numbers "forty-two months" in xi, 2, and xiii, 5, and the "1260 days" of xi, 3, xii, 6, and the "time, times and half-time" of xii, 14, all mean the same thing—i.e., 1260 years, which delimits the wilderness period of the church, commencing about A.D. 250, and extending to A.D. 1510.

With this clarifying view of chapter xii, we are now prepared to undertake the exposition of chapter xiii, and particularly to see the connection between them. Chapter xii left the church in the wilderness, A.D. 250, to remain there 1260 years bearing "other seed," and left Satan exceedingly angry at his failure to destroy it by the persecution of Pagan Rome, and devising in his

wrath some other method of continuing the war. This chapter, our present lesson, gives his new device, which, in a few words, is the establishment of a counterfeit church. This counterfeit church, while changing the names of its objects of worship, will have more of them than heathen polytheism ever assembled on Mount Olympus, and whose images are more numerous than all ever placed in a heathen pantheon. It will have more persecuting powers than Pagan Rome, and the power this time will extend beyond the grave. Out of the ruins of the Pagan Roman Empire it will construct a more formidable "Holy Roman Empire," whose boundaries will be pushed far beyond the limits of Pagan Roman territory. While the Cæsar head of Pagan Rome was wounded unto death, the wound will be healed by a Papal head. There were only twelve Cæsars—there will be a multitude of Popes, among them a Pope and his son Cæsar Borgia worse than Nero. By using Pagan Rome as his tail the great red dragon was able to draw down to earth only a third of the stars, i.e., to corrupt only one-third of the ministry, but with Papal Rome as his tail this Scriptural crocodile will sweep down into his Nile for devouring the overwhelming majority of the ministry.

This device of Satan, in its ultimate proportions, will not be a mushroom product, nor an Aladdin palace springing up in a night, but a steady development of the centuries, a ceaseless evolution by accretion of the ages. All the seven wonders of the classic world will pale into insignificance before this prodigy—Satan's great masterpiece. The statue of its Pope will cast a longer shadow than Jupiter's on Mount Olympus; its temple will surpass Diana's at Ephesus. This colossus will outstraddle the bronze pigmy at Rhodes. Its pyramid will exceed that of Cheops on the Nile, and its Sphinx will not be dumb;

the lighthouse at Pharos, near Alexandria, revealed a port of entry to storm-tossed little Mediterranean ships—but this in the name of a lighthouse, will diffuse darkness on a thousand rock-bound ocean shores, that mighty liners may grind their keels and ribs of steel into the fine powder of total shipwreck. In the days of Pericles classic art embellished the Acropolis at Athens, but this acropolis will exhaust for centuries the skill of subservient architects, painters and sculptors. The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus held the dust of only one honoured king; this mausoleum will hold the dust of many dishonoured kings and statesmen.

But, let us turn from rhetoric to detailed exposition:

xiii, 1—the Common Version reads: "And *I* stood upon the sand of the sea." Our revision corrects the misleading pronoun: "And *he* stood upon the sands of the sea"—he, the dragon of the preceding verse, mad at his failure in employing Pagan persecution. Why stood he at the sea? "Sea" in this book means the peoples, or confluent materials of nations (xvii, 15). Satan is contemplating the heterogeneous national material disintegrated by the fall of Pagan Rome, and calculating a reconstruction more efficient for his purpose than Pagan Rome. He is the usurping *de facto* king of the nations. He recalls a temptation once offered to our Lord: "All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." (Matthew iv, 8-10.) Our Lord rejected it. Satan knew also that the radiant woman of xii, 1, the true church, would reject it, even to escape the wilderness. But he argues: Why not I establish a counterfeit church that will accept it on my conditions? And so John the seer is enabled to witness the method of his work.

"And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea."

"Beast" in this book, as in Daniel vii, 1-8 (which see), means a king or government. And follows a description of this sea-beast, which wars against the saints and has authority for 1260 years—all the wilderness period of the church, i.e., up to the Reformation, when its power wanes until re-animated by the earth-beast (verses 11, 12). We may not attempt to interpret this vision except in the light of Daniel vii, 19-25, and Revelation xvii, 7-18. The whole passage seems to teach the transition from a Pagan Roman Empire to a so-called "Holy Roman Empire." That is, commencing with the Emperor Constantine, there came about first a union of church and state, with the state at first on top, followed later by the church on top. Constantine might claim that he was the head of the church, but gradually the Pope became the head of both state and church. In the order of history the spotted beast—church and state—would precede the earth-beast, looking like a lamb, but having the voice of a dragon, representing the Papacy. The idea of the Pope's universal supremacy would be a gradual development, which in all its fulness was not attained until the Vatican Council in 1870. A universal visible church, united with the state and dominant over the state, naturally receives its consummation in an earthly, visible and infallible head. So the leopard sea-beast would represent a political-religious world-empire, and the earth-beast of verse 11 would represent the Papal head of this empire, galvanizing it into at least a semblance of life after its political life was broken, by his infallible "ipse dixit."

In a union of church and state two results always follow: A quarrel concerning ultimate authority: shall the state dominate the church, or the church dominate the state? No matter which dominates, there is sure to be

persecution of those who claim liberty to worship God according to the dictates of the individual. Where a church claims to be universal, with ultimate jurisdiction over all states, there will certainly be a revolt of states against the church.

Thirteenth chapter; first clause of the 1st verse: "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy." If you turn to the description of the dragon in your last lesson, you will see both a likeness and an unlikeness: "I saw a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems." Here the diadems on this beast are on his horns. The likeness arises from the fact that the government created by the dragon will resemble the dragon; and the unlikeness will arise from the fact that the horns, signifying power, will be different because the first was wholly spiritual, and the second will be secular.

What do the seven heads mean? "I saw a beast come up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads"—suppose you turn with me to the seventeenth chapter, it will give us God's explanation. 9th verse: "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth" —that looks like it means the seven hills on which Rome was built, to which there may be a remote allusion; but let us go on and read a little further: "And they are [that is, they represent] seven kings [or better, seven kingdoms], five are fallen, one is, and the other is yet to come, and when he cometh he must continue a little while." Now, when we take Daniel and Revelation together, we understand these seven world-empires—the kingdoms that oppose the Kingdom of God in every age. First, the Egyptians; they wanted to destroy Israel or

keep it in bondage. The second was Assyria, with its capital at Nineveh, that destroyed the ten tribes. These two had passed away before Daniel wrote, and hence he does not discuss them. When John comes to write five are fallen, so we must add three more to the two that had fallen when Daniel wrote. These three were Babylon, which captured Judah; Persia, which, at Haman's suggestion, was about to destroy the Jewish exiles; and Greece, which, particularly under Antiochus Epiphanes, sought to destroy utterly the religion of the Jews. Daniel saw four: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. Now, when John wrote, five of these world-empires had passed away, and the sixth, the Roman Empire, is the one which will destroy Jerusalem and is now persecuting under Domitian. When John wrote it was still in great power. The seventh would be this spotted beast that this lesson is discussing—the Holy Roman Empire, and hence we can understand how the eighth (xiii, 11) is not a nation, but is of the seventh. The eighth is the Papacy, not a nation, but is of the seventh and has the power of the seventh. Now, do you get that point clear? That there is a likeness in every great world-empire that wars against the Kingdom of God—a persecuting likeness and a blaspheming likeness. Every one of these assumed divine as well as human power, from Egypt to Rome. The emperor claimed to be Pontifex Maximus—that is, high priest of the religion of the nation, and also claimed to be God, demanding to be worshipped. The image of Cæsar was put up on their standards, and when the legions would wake up in the morning the first thing to do would be to bow down and worship the image of Cæsar on the standard.

Now, this last beast is represented as having seven heads. That is, it blends all the evils of the six preceding

world-powers, and itself will be the seventh. What are the ten horns? The seventeenth chapter will tell you (12th verse): "And the ten horns that thou seest are the ten kings that have received no kingdoms yet." That is, the ten kingdoms that were to be built up out of Pagan Rome were not yet established; he is looking into the future and sees them, but they are not yet. I ask you particularly to notice these ten horns and the ten kingdoms. They support the woman in purple and scarlet (xvii, 13) and these ten kingdoms give their power and authority unto the beast—every one of the ten kingdoms that were established out of the ruins of the Pagan Roman Empire and constitute the Holy Roman Empire championed the Roman Catholic religion.

But look at the 16th verse: "And the ten horns which thou seest on the beast, these shall hate the harlot and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." That means that in later history these ten governments in succession would become the oppressors of the Roman Catholic church, as France threw off its allegiance, and as did Germany, and later Holland, Switzerland, all Scandinavia,—i.e., Denmark, Norway, Sweden,—and England, Scotland and Wales, and turned their powers against this great whore that represents the Roman Catholic church, and finally Italy itself, when Victor Emmanuel led his army into Rome and destroyed the temporal power of the Pope, and carried an open Bible at the head of his entrance column. You thus see what the ten kings, or ten horns, mean.

We now come to the description of this beast (2d verse): "And the beast that I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority." If

you turn back to that seventh chapter of Daniel, you will notice that this beast combines the elements of the four beasts of his vision. The predominating quality here is the leopard; i.e., the beast had the leopard's form. Which means it was a spotted government, a mixed government, it was a politico-religious government. That is the reason the leopard predominates—it is a spotted beast.

3d verse: "And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death"—that is, the Pagan Roman head, yet further when John writes—"and I saw that one head was smitten to death and his death stroke was healed." In other words, succeeding Pagan Rome came Papal Rome. The centre of authority is still in the city of Rome, the governing power still goes out from that centre, but the Cæsar head dies in the destruction of Pagan Rome, and the Pope head comes in the place of it.

Last of the 3d verse: "And the whole earth wondered after the beast"—well, it *was* a prodigy; there had never been anything just like it. It was not like Pagan Rome in this, that there were ten kingdoms united on their religion, but divided in their civil authority, until the Pope usurped the civil as well as the religious authority. So it was the strangest beast ever seen. "And they worshipped the dragon because he gave his authority unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying: Who is like unto the beast, who is able to war with him?" For many centuries of the 1260 years no nation in Europe was able to war with the power represented by the Pope.

"And there was given to him a mouth, speaking great things and blasphemies, and there was given to him authority to continue forty-two months" (rather, *to do*

his work; the Greek word shows not so much the idea of continuance as ability to do his work. He continued after the 1260 years, but without ability to do as before). He still claims the same authority, but he cannot do his work like he did up to that time. "And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle [that is, his church], even they that dwell in heaven [that is, the true saints], and it was given to him to make war with the saints to overcome them. And it was given him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation [he was permitted to make such claim], and all that dwell on the earth shall worship him [note the exception], every one whose name hath not been written on the Lamb's book of life." These, the true people of God, did not worship him—all over Europe there were people who refused to submit, even unto death. They were true candlesticks, but shining in the wilderness. Human history does not take much notice of them. There were true preachers, though by using this new kind of tail the dragon swept down the most of the stars.

10th verse, last clause: "Here is the patience and faith of the saints." In the fourteenth chapter, and 12th verse, we have this language repeated in another sense: "Here is the patience of the saints." Here it means the patience of the saints in enduring the trials by faith. The next time it means the fruition of patience: I will call your attention to it again in a subsequent chapter.

We now come to a description which shows that the Papacy does not come out of the sea—that is, it is not a nation: "And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb but spoke as a dragon." It claimed to be a lamb but it was a dragon.

Now, when you turn to the seventh chapter of Daniel, he says: "I saw a little horn come up that destroyed three of the other horns"—so the Pope usurped the civil jurisdiction of several of the states, and claimed them as Papal states and was king over them. That little horn in Daniel's fourth beast and this two-horned beast here that has the voice of the dragon and that claimed to be a lamb, and the false prophet in the nineteenth chapter as being cast into the abyss with the beast, all mean the same thing; the little horn, the lamb-dragon beast, and the false prophet all mean the Papacy: Pope comes from "papa," or father, hence papacy. It is not a nation and hence is represented as coming up out of the earth, and yet he is the eighth government, rising out of the seven governments, or beasts. We see that he is the one that heals the death stroke of the sixth head; when the Cæsar head dies, the Pope head succeeds. There is attributed to him, in the rest of this lesson, great miracle-working power. John does not affirm that these were real miracles—he reports as he sees; he saw a vision of the Pope giving the beast the power of miracles of different kinds. It is characteristic of Roman Catholicism that from the beginning of its history down to the present time it is brimful of so-called miracles; its images are made to speak, or weep, or bleed.

Turn to the 16th verse: "And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, the free and the bond, that they be given a mark on their right hand, and upon their forehead." Many have tried to explain what is the mark of the beast given by this Pope. One old Baptist preacher insists that it was infant baptism, followed by a sign of the cross made on the forehead. Your lesson tells you (verse 17) that "the mark is the name of the beast or the number of his name." And

adds: "Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six." Whoever can interpret this knows what is "the mark." No better explanation of this passage has been given than that of Irenæus. The first Roman ruler was Latinus. His name spelled in Greek is Lateinos. Greek letters are numerals, each letter standing for a certain number. Thus: L-a-t-e-i-n-o-s. I give you English letters corresponding to the Greek because some of you do not know Greek.

L (Greek, *Lamda*)	= 30	*n* (Greek, *Nu*)	= 50
a (Greek, *Alpha*)	= 1	*o* (Greek, *Omikron*)	= 70
t (Greek, *Tau*)	= 300	*s* (Greek, *Sigma*)	= 200
e (Greek, *Epsilon*)	= 5		
i (Greek, *Iota*)	= 10	Total	666

These Greek letters when used as numerals are equal to the numbers opposite and their added total is 666. Here, then, is the number of the beast and it is the number of a man, and it is 666.

The mark of the beast then is the word "*Latin.*" On which Alford observes: "The Latin Empire, the Latin church, Latin Christianity, have ever been its commonly current appellations; its language, civil and ecclesiastical, has ever been Latin; its public services, in defiance of the most obvious requisite for public worship, have ever been throughout the world conducted in Latin; there is no other one word which could so completely describe its character, and at the same time unite the ancient and modern attributes of the two beasts." Alford might have added: No version of the Scriptures considered authoritative except the Latin Version and that only as

interpreted by the Latin Church. Irenæus had in mind the Pagan Latin Empire, Alford more wisely its transition into the Papal Latin Empire.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. State the three distinct assaults of Satan in trying to destroy the church as an institution, and wherein he failed in each case.
2. Was there a real fall of Satan and his angels before the fall of Adam? If so, prove it Scripturally and then show the relation of that ancient history to the imagery of the future events in chapter xii.
3. Show the relation of Satan's assaults on the infant Jesus to the imagery of the man-child in chapter xii.
4. Show what verses of chapter xii are epexegetical of other verses.
5. What symbolical numbers of xi, xii, xiii are equal to each other?
6. About what date did the church enter the wilderness, on account of what persecution, and about what date did it emerge?

Questions on Chapter XII

7. Verse 1: meaning "He stood on the sand and the sea"?
8. In a few words, tell what the new device of Satan as an instrument of war against the church.
9. Show how this new device will have more idolatry than Pagan Rome, more persecuting power, a more formidable head than the Cæsar of Rome, and corrupt more preachers.
10. Show how it will be more wonderful than each of the seven wonders of the classical world.
11. What passage of Scripture enables us to interpret the leopard of xiii, 1; the lamb-dragon beast of xiii, 11, and the harlot woman of xvii, 1-6?
12. In the light of these scriptures what the leopard beast? And the nature of it?
13. What the lamb-dragon beast?
14. What the harlot?
15. What the expression in Daniel vii, and what other expression in chapter xix of this book, mean the same thing as the lamb-dragon beast?
16. What two results always follow a union of church and state?
17. Explain in verse 2 the wounding of one head unto death, and the healing of the wound.
18. What the real meaning of the Greek word rendered "continue" in verse 5?

19. (a) What the difference between the common version and the Revised Version rendering of verse 8? (b) if common version is right, what the meaning? (c) if Revised Version is right? Which do you prefer?

20. What the meaning of verse 17?

21. What "the mark of the beast," verse 16, as explained in verse 18, and the exposition thereof by Irenæus and Alford?

XIII

PROPHETIC FORECASTS (CONTINUED)

Revelation XIV

THE preceding chapter will be reviewed only this much:

1. Satan, considering the chaotic and disintegrated national material of the fallen Pagan Roman Empire, reconstructed another Roman Empire, composed of many states, each with its own national government, but united in its religion. This was a union of church and state—sometimes the state exercising jurisdiction over the church, demanding universal conformity in religion as the ruler of the state understood it; and sometimes the church dominating the state with a tendency toward absolute church supremacy in both civil and ecclesiastical matters. Until the church pressed the state too far in local state affairs, they gave their power and authority to the church; but when the pressure became intolerable the state would rend the church.

As the states succeeded in their revolt against the assumption of the church authority over state matters, their maxim would yet be: "Whose is the government his is the religion"—i.e., the head of each state will become the head of the church in his own domain, proscribing all dissent from his own religion. This maxim was later maintained by Protestant states as well as by Papal states; by Geneva and Henry VIII, as well as by Philip of Spain and Louis XIV of France.

2. This strange empire, called later "The Holy Roman Empire," is symbolized by the leopard-beast of xiii, 1, 2.

3. The ecclesiastical head, which ultimately assumed absolute jurisdiction over all states and all religions—in other words, the Papacy or succession of Popes—is symbolized by the *earth*-beast that looked like a lamb but had the voice of the dragon—xiii, 11.

4. The counterfeit church as an institution of which the Pope was the head is symbolized by the harlot sitting on or riding the leopard-beast—xvii, 1-6.

5. The Scriptural passages governing this interpretation are Daniel vii, 7-25, and Revelation xvii, 7-18.

6. This interpretation identifies the Papal beast of xiii, 11, with "the little horn" of Daniel vii, 8, and with the false prophet of Revelation xix, 20.

7. The reader must understand that the transition from Pagan Rome to "The Holy Roman Empire" was gradual, marked by successive changes, and that the Papacy developed from small beginnings to its culmination at the Vatican Council in 1870 in the declaration of Papal infallibility. And that the Roman Catholic hierarchy, imaged by the harlot of xvii, 1-6, was also a development of the centuries.

Having thus considered Satan's new device for destroying Christ's luminous institution, and for corrupting the ministry, and for perverting the gospel, we will in chapter xiv consider the spiritual forces aligned on the other side.

Chapter xiv is divided into four parts:

Part I—The Lamb, His true church, the holy angels and His people—(xiv, 1-5).

Part II—The proclamation of the three angels—(xiv, 6-13).

Part III—The harvest of the good—(xiv, 14-16).

Part IV—The vintage of the evil—(xiv, 14-20).

The chief purpose of chapter xiv is to give a summary of Christ's victory over Satan, and of the final and complete victory of the true church over the counterfeit. I say a *summary*—a bare outline—whose methods and details are set forth elaborately in all the rest of the section—i.e., from xv, 1, to xix, 10.

Then from another viewpoint other details of chapter xiv outline will be given in the last synchronous view from xix, 11, to xx, 6, though in this case the view extends somewhat beyond anything clearly suggested in this outline. It is important to note this relation of chapter xiv to subsequent chapters—a relation of outline to details.

PART ONE

(xiv, 1-5) "And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping on their harps: And they sing as it were a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth. These are they that were not defiled of women; for they are virgins. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no lie; they were without blemish."

As chapter xiii gave us a view of Satan, his beasts,

his seat of empire the counterfeit church, his counterfeit gospel, his worshippers and the character of their worship, this vision opens with a view of our Lord, as the "Lamb," His seat of power "Mount Zion"—i.e., the true church—His worshippers, their secure redemption, their character, and the nature of their worship.

It is of great importance that we interpret these symbols not *literally*, but according to the law of symbols, *what they represent*. "The Lamb" is not a real sheep, but symbolizes our Lord as the expiating sacrifice for sin. Without expiation and atonement for sin Satan's power over sinners cannot be broken, nor can these sinners otherwise be redeemed nor made secure in their redemption, nor appear *clean* in God's sight. "Mount Zion" here is not the real mountain in Jerusalem, nor the heavenly Jerusalem of chapters xxi and xxii, but the militant Mount Zion—that is, the true church on earth considered as an institution—in other words, the radiant woman of xii, 1. So the hundred and forty-four thousand numbers His people symbolically, *not literally*, but representatively. It is a perfect multiple of the sacred 12, many times appearing in this book—twelve tribes, twelve stars, twelve apostles, twelve foundations, twenty-four elders—i.e., twice twelve. There is, however, this difference between the application of the hundred and forty-four thousand here (xiv, 1) and its re-appearance in xvii, 8. Here it represents the spiritual Israel without regard to nationality; there it represents the elect Jews as contradistinguished from the saved of other nations, as the context shows.

As Satan's followers bore on their forehead and hand a symbolic brand, so here on the forehead of Christ's people are symbolically written the names of the Lamb and of His Father. In both cases the marks are symbols

not of character, as many commentators would have it, but of *ownership*. One class the devil owns—the other class belongs to God. West Texans will understand, for they, in riding the range, recognize that the different brands on cattle do not refer to the quality of the cattle —i.e., whether long-horns, short-horns, Durhams, Jerseys, Holsteins, or Herefords—but indicate the owner.

The singers and harpers of the new song, in verses 2 and 3, seem to be the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy angels of v, 11. They are in that chapter, and here, distinguished from the throne, the Cherubim, and the Elders, because they sing *before them*, and they are distinguished from the saints on earth, for the saints learn the song after these sing it. The idea is that high up and far away, around the throne of God, the angels, with harp and voice, are praising the Lamb for His work of redemption, as in v, 12—"Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing." You read a similar song at the birth of our Lord by the same singers, in Luke ii, 13, 14—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." Had it been a hymn of creation or providence, as when all these angelic "sons shouted for joy," or as Psalm civ, it would not have been a new song. But as it relates to the Redeemer and to redemption only, it is *new*. Again, had it been a song of creation, any deist like Tom Paine, admiring Addison's paraphrase of the nineteenth Psalm, or any admirer of Pope's "Universal Prayer" addressed to "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," might learn it. But, being a song of redemption, only the redeemed on earth—blood-washed—would have their hearts attuned to its harmony. They could learn it.

Again, the idea is that praise, all the time, in loudest melody is filling the courts of heaven and echoing through the universe, but on earth only those whose spiritual ears have been opened can hear the music, and only hearts purified by the cleansing blood can take up the response, and thus constitute a grand antiphony—earthly choirs responding to heavenly choirs in one blended sublime symphony. Bunyan's man with the muckrake, eyes downcast, never saw or heard the angel above him offering an eternal crown.

We need particularly to understand the characteristics of the hundred and forty-four thousand in verses 4 and 5:

1. "They were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." The word "virgins" is common gender, i.e., may apply, and does here apply, to both sexes. But it is a gross perversion of the interpretation of symbolic language to make this characteristic apply to celibacy and thereby commend monks and nuns. Spiritual incontinence was the worship of idols. The symbolic "virgins" here means that these saints had not worshipped Satan, nor his leopard-beast, nor his lamb-dragon beast, nor the image of the beast.

2. "They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." This is the characteristic of obedience. As our Lord had said: "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me," and when He said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and yet again: "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." The emphasis on the "whithersoever" implies that we should not merely follow in the days of loaves and fishes, nor merely as the "hosanna" crowd on His entrance into Jerusalem, but follow Him to the cross. His leadership should be paramount

even when to follow means prisons, chains, confiscation or death.

3. They were "purchased" men, bought with His own precious blood of redemption, and hence a property "peculiar" to Him. His ownership was absolute.

4. "Firstfruits"—The idea again is one of ownership. Under the law firstfruits were not for common use, but belonged to God only and must be offered to Him alone. This applies to the firstborn of families and all cattle. The thought differs from ownership by purchase. It affirms an original ownership, as the firstborn son or the firstborn male of cattle or other stock, and the firstfruits of all harvests belonged to God. This is the thought in Hebrews xii, 23—"Church of the firstborn."

5. "In their mouth was found no lie." Here again the veracity commended was a spiritual quality, meaning that they neither preached, taught, nor testified to a *doctrinal lie.* Theirs was no dragon, no beast message; but the real gospel of Jesus Christ. They perverted not His ordinances; they deluded not by pointing to a false hope. There is no reference to lying in general. Of course, Christianity condemns that.

6. "They are without blemish." Here again the reference is not to a freedom from faults or infirmities, physical or mental, and I say not even—or at least not exclusively—to a freedom from immorality in the ordinary sense. A comparison of all the parallel passages shows: (a) There is no blemish in their external righteousness before the law, for it is in Christ's perfect imputed righteousness. (b) There is no blemish on their internal righteousness, for it is a holiness commenced in regeneration and carried on and consummated in sanctification. (See Ephesians v, 27.) The logical, not the

chronological order of these six characteristics expressed in plain English is this:

1. They are Christ's because He created them.

2. They are Christ's because when sold into bondage to Satan through sin He bought them back with His own precious blood.

3. They are not idolaters—not guilty of spiritual fornication.

4. They obey Christ, not Satan nor his beasts, nor the harlot, nor the world.

5. They preach and teach the gospel, not the "doctrines of demons."

6. They are without blemish because justified, regenerated, sanctified. These are the righteousnesses which are spotless.

Having now considered part one of our chapter, describing our Lord, His church, His holy angels, His people, we turn to—

PART TWO

The proclamations of the Three Angels: (verses 6 to 13).

First Angel: "And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people; and he saith with a great voice: Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and the sea and fountains of waters."

Under the imagery of this flying angel is set forth the means by which the saints on earth win their victory over Satan, his "Holy Roman Empire," its Papal head

and counterfeit church. That means the world-wide diffusion of the true gospel. Wheresoever that gospel is preached in its purity and accepted by faith, there God is feared and not the Pope: there the glory is given to the Lamb and not to the Virgin Mary. Kings and secular governments, offended at Papal usurpation, may and do resort to carnal means for the suppression of this unholy power. They may and do, by legal enactment, abolish monasteries and nunneries, banish the Jesuits, sever the connection between their state religions and the Papal. They may and do both prescribe and proscribe by way of restraint. But as the kingdom of our Lord is not of this world, His servants fight with different weapons. Their offensive weapon is the Word of God—the sword of the Spirit. They preach the Word; placard the skies with it; fill the earth with it; translate it into every tongue, tell its saving story by preacher and layman to all nations, relying on the Spirit's convicting, regenerating and sanctifying power.

It is this 6th verse that gave rise to the missionary hymn "Fly abroad, thou mighty gospel." It is called an everlasting because it will never become obsolete. An atheistic president of a great university may vainly try to supersede it with "a new religion." It is everlasting and confers life everlasting upon its loving recipients. What a pity when Christians lay aside this tempered, two-edged, sharp-pointed New Jerusalem blade for a carnal weapon.

The Second Angel: "And another, a second angel, followed, saying: Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

This is God's pre-announcement of the doom of the counterfeit church, with the indictment that she had

made all nations participate in her spiritual fornication —that is, substitution of worship of the creature for the worship of the Creator and Redeemer. The verdict of history sustains the indictment. They have made a man the head of the church instead of our Lord, and called him "My Lord God, the Pope." They have vested him with infallibility, when speaking "ex-cathedra." They have made him Christ's vicar instead of the Holy Spirit, and have vested him with the two keys and the two swords, usurping Christ's authority to open and shut, both ecclesiastical and secular authority to punish the whole world. They have made a woman "the queen of heaven," declared her "the fountain of all grace," and interposed her as mediator between the saint and his Saviour—the only mediator between God and man. This is not Mariology, but Mariolatry. They confer on the consecrating priest the authority to "create God," and when the wafer is consecrated it is worshipped as God, thus multiplying the passion of our Lord, who "suffered once for all." They have caused the world to adore images and relics, attributing to them many lying miracles. They have claimed jurisdiction over the Spirit-world, and lengthened probation beyond the grave. In imitation of the heathen demigods, they have filled the calendar with saints whose help is invoked in prayer. They have changed ordinances, added to them, and attributed to them saving power. No wonder this device of Satan is said to be "full of the names of blasphemies" and her cup "full of fornications."

The Third Angel: "And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice: If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared

unmixed [that is, undiluted] in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name."

The simple meaning of this paragraph is that those who incorrigibly persist in drinking from the harlot's cup of *mixed* abominations, shall be made to drink of the cup of God's *unmixed* wrath, i.e., undiluted wrath. As a later detail (xviii, 4) distinctly shows, it does not mean that God has no real children among the Papists. It would be an outrage on common sense and history to make such a sweeping accusation.

This Part Two closes with two verses somewhat difficult to expound with confidence: "Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them." I give you my best judgment of the meaning both negatively and positively: Your attention has already been called to the difference in meaning between "Here is the patience of the saints" as expressed in xiii, 10, and as expressed here, xiv, 12. You notice in xiii, 10, the phrase is modified by "and the faith," but not so modified here, which as I think means that in the first case the saints in their endurance are consoled only by faith that God will *ultimately* vindicate them. In the latter case the *fruition* of faith is at hand. They are vindicated; there is no delay any longer, which suggests the clue to the meaning of the 13th verse. Which does

not mean that those who die at another time are not blessed. But it does mean that there is *a sense* in which those dying in the Lord after the fall of the Papal Rome are blessed, which martyrs who died in the Lord in the hour of Papal triumph did not share. And the precise sense is defined in the concluding clause: "For their works do follow them." It was a long time before the works of the martyrs followed them into glory, i.e., until the wisdom and righteousness of their course was demonstrated. In the eyes of their companions their bloody death seemed to be a failure. But now, when the persecuting power is destroyed and popular sentiment is with the saint, his death is not regarded as a tragedy but a glorious consummation of a happy life. Paul, in a measure, expresses the thought when he charges Timothy not to be hasty in ordaining men, because while in some men their character is evident at first sight, in others it is not evident. As he expresses it: "Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins . . . Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after. In like manner also there are good works that are evident; and such as are cannot be hid."

Now that the persecuting power is destroyed, Write: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *henceforth,* for their works do follow them."

PART THREE

The Great Harvest

14th verse: "And I saw, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud I saw one sitting, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple crying with a great

voice to him that sat on the cloud: Send forth thy sickle and reap; for the hour to reap is come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped."

Now, that is the harvest of the good.

PART FOUR

The Great Vintage

17th verse: "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying: Send forth thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vines of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel cast his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridle of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

That is the harvest of the bad. The director of both the harvest and the vintage is our Lord Himself. The agents employed are the angels. The general import of these two parts of the chapter is much the same as that of the parable of the tares as expounded by our Lord Himself: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom, and the tares are the sons of the evil one and the enemy that sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the

end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity and shall cast them into the flames of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear." And much the same is that of the parable of the dragnet: "And again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered every kind; which when it was filled they drew up on the beach, and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away. So shall it be in the end of the world; the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The only difference in the exact import lies in this: That the parables of the tares and dragnet represent the final judgment scene, whereas the harvest and the vintage here represent that era of judgments which precedes even the Millennium and introduces it. There is a triumph of the true church, more elaborately set forth later, and the downfall of the counterfeit church, also set forth later with elaborate details. There is a complete reversal of the relative positions of the two institutions. In xii, 6, the true church is in the obscurity of the wilderness for 1260 years. In xvii, 3, the counterfeit church is in the wilderness, about to receive her final doom. Particularly the vintage will re-appear in the great war of Armageddon (xvi, 16) and in the winepress of the wrath (xix, 15), as it had already been forecast by Isaiah (lxiii, 1-6).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Review of Preceding Chapter

1. What the symbol of the "Holy Roman Empire" which succeeded to Pagan Rome?
2. What the symbol of its ecclesiastical head?
3. What the symbol of the counterfeit church?
4. What the scriptures which govern the interpretation?
5. With what expression in Daniel, and a later one in this book, is the lamb-dragon beast identified?
6. Were the "Holy Roman Empire," and the Papacy, and the Romanish hierarchy instantaneous products, or all gradual developments from small beginnings?

Chapter Fourteen

7. What the four parts of this chapter?
8. What its general purpose and relation to succeeding chapters?
9. What caution in interpreting the symbolism of this chapter?

Part One—xiv, 1-5

10. Under what symbol does our Lord appear, and its meaning?
11. Under what symbol does the church appear, and its meaning negatively and positively?
12. Who are symbolized by the 144,000, and what distinction in meaning between that symbolic number here and in xvii, 8?
13. Illustrate in a way familiar to West Texans that the Satan brand on forehead and hand, and the divine inscription on the foreheads of the saints, do not represent character or quality, but ownership.
14. Who the singers and harpers of verse 2?
15. Explain the "*new* song" they sing, and cite two similar preceding songs.
16. Cite instances of an "Old Song," and who could learn to sing that; and why only the redeemed can learn the new song.
17. Explain negatively where necessary, and positively, each one of the six characteristics of the saints.
18. Repeat in *logical* order, and without symbols, these six characteristics.

The Proclamations of the Three Angels

19. State briefly the meaning of the "Flying Angel."
20. Distinguish between the *means* of victory over the counterfeit church employed by the saints and by secular governments, and why?

21. Why is this gospel called "everlasting," and how does it rebuke a certain president emeritus of a great university?
22. What hymn suggested by this verse?
23. What the meaning of the second proclamation; and what the indictment of the counterfeit church?
24. Show how history sustains the indictment.
25. Meaning of the third angelic proclamation. Prove from subsequent passage that this destruction does not overtake all Romanists.
26. What the difference between the "patience of the saints" in xiii, 10, and xiv, 12?
27. Explain the "henceforth" in xiv, 13.
28. In general terms what the meaning of the harvest and what the vintage of xiv, 14-20?
29. In general terms wherein is this paragraph like two parables of our Lord, but wherein does it differ from those parables?
30. In what subsequent passages of this book does the vintage re-appear in more details, and what prophet forecasts this vintage?

XIV

THE SEVEN PLAGUES AND THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

Revelation XV and XVI

WE shall consider in this study the seven plagues and the seven bowls of wrath, or the divine judgment on the leopard-beast, and the harlot woman, and the consequent triumph of the true church through the gospel. Chapters xvii, xviii and xix will continue the same theme.

Preliminary Observations

1. xv, 1, by anticipation, presents the plagues as if inflicted, though the details of the infliction are given in chapter xvi.

2. xv, 2-4, in like manner—i.e., by anticipation—presents the triumph of the saints when the plagues shall have been inflicted, and is given in more detail in xix, 1-10, in its proper historical connection.

3. xv, 5-8, also by anticipation, gives the *agencies* through which the plagues in chapter xvi will be inflicted and the triumph achieved.

4. The Old Testament analogue which constitutes *most* of the imagery of chapters xv and xvi is Exodus i to xv. We cannot successfully interpret this lesson without an

understanding of the ancient history which suggests its imagery.

5. Another historical analogue, Babylon, and the Euphrates which constituted both its defence and its weakness, suggests the imagery in xvi, 12. Here our historical background is Xenophon's account of the capture of Babylon by the armies of Cyrus, through diversion of the waters of the Euphrates, and consequent drying up of its channel in the city, confirmed both by the prophecy of Jeremiah (l, 38) and by this passage in Revelation. The Babylon downfall as foretold by the ancient prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, will suggest much of the imagery of chapters xvii and xviii, which will be more particularly considered in the exposition of those chapters.

6. Our interpretation will make the "seven thunders" of x, 4, uttered then but temporarily sealed up, i.e., not written, and "the seven plagues" of chapter xv, and "the seven bowls of wrath" of chapter xvi, substantially the same, though the logical order would be this: The seven thunders called, the seven bowls of wrath responded to the call, and the seven bowls of wrath when outpoured constitute the seven plagues.

These six preliminary observations underlie the exegesis now given in detail.

Chapter XV

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God."

The reader must note that when these plagues are called "the last," for in them is finished the "wrath of God," the import of the term "last" and "finished" must not be stretched beyond their connection. It is a rela-

tive "last" and "finished." It is the last of the divine judgment on the organized apostasy in its triple form of a "Holy Roman Empire," a Papal head and an idolatrous and persecuting counterfeit church, but it cannot refer to the wrath exercised after the Millennium in xx, 7-10, nor the wrath of the final judgment (xx, 11-15). Note next on this first verse the "seven plagues" repeated in verses 6 and 8 and named in xvi, 8-21. Their number "seven" indicates their completeness, as will appear when the bowls of wrath which produce them are poured out in succession on the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, the sun, the Euphrates and the air. When the lightning strikes in all these places, it touches the whole circumference of environment. There is no escape from such diverse wrath. It is done. It is finished. The measure is filled up to overflowing.

We now look back to the historical analogue. We have in Exodus i to xv the great war between Jehovah and the gods of Egypt for the redemption of His national Israel, or between Moses, the mouthpiece of God, and Pharaoh, king of Egypt, or between the miracles wrought by Moses and the lying wonders of the magicians, Jannes and Jambres. Jehovah speaks, Moses acts, the ten plagues follow, just as here the seven thunders are God's voices, the bowls of wrath respond and the plagues are the result. Whoever has studied the ten plagues of Egypt will see their completeness touching all the environment and degrading every god in Egypt, and all their ministers, whether king, magician or priest. All these discriminated between Israel and Egypt; on one they fell, the other was exempt. The very form of some of these plagues is repeated here, as will appear in our exegesis of chapter xvi. The conflict terminated with the complete overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in

the Red Sea, and "Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore, and Israel saw the great work which Jehovah did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared Jehovah; and they believed in Jehovah and in his servant Moses." Exodus xiv, 30, 31.

"And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that came off victorious from the beast, and from his image and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou king of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy righteous acts have been made manifest."

This is almost an exact parallel of the analogue at Exodus xiv, 19-22, and the triumph song at Exodus xv, 1-18, and Miriam's response at Exodus xv, 20, 21. The Old Testament analogue alone enables us to explain "the sea of glass mingled with fire" which so unnecessarily perplexed commentators. You need only to conceive of the Red Sea divided standing up in walls on either side, and as Exodus xv, 8, expresses it: "The floods stood upright as an heap; the deeps were concealed in the heart of the sea," then conceive Israel marching in triumph between and the pillar of fire between them and Pharaoh, shining on those ice walls which, as mirrors, reflected its light, it indeed seemed a "sea of glass mingled with fire," and so "they were baptized in the cloud [pillar of cloud overshadowing] and in the sea" (her walls on

two sides encompassing them). Hence it might be called a baptism, so overwhelmed and enwrapped were they, but it was *a baptism in light.* So here, after the plagues have overthrown their long-time enemies with a complete overthrow, the saints, bathed in radiance, sing their song of triumph which, on account of the analogue, is called "The song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb."

The study is profitable to compare the Moses song (Exodus xv) with the song here (Revelation xv), and its more elaborate form (Revelation xix).

On the closing paragraph of chapter xv, verses 5-8, it is necessary now to note only the following points:

1. "The temple of the tabernacle of testimony," or the sanctuary of the tent, means here the church as an institution, through which as an agent the plagues are to be inflicted.

2. The priestly garb of the angels carrying the plague also indicates human agency.

3. The "smoke" in temple or sanctuary indicates the Divine Presence, as in Exodus xl, 34; Numbers ix, 15; I Kings viii, 10-11; Isaiah vi, 4. While Moses nor the priests of Solomon could for a while enter the Holy House, filled by the cloud, there seems to be an additional idea in the Isaiah case that as God entered for fully ripened judgments there could be no intercession allowed while the judgments were being inflicted, since probation was ended and the space for repentance was withdrawn. Such also appears to be the idea here, as we repeatedly note in chapter xvi that no repentance followed these plagues. (See xvi, 9-11.) The plagues, therefore, were not chastisements designed to lead to repentance, but altogether punitive.

Chapter XVI

The Bowls of Wrath, and the Consequent Plagues

General Observations:

1. I restate the general idea of interpretation already suggested by the Old Testament analogue, Exodus i-xv. Before Pharaoh and his people could be induced to liberate God's ancient Israel, all the supports of their power must be swept away by successive divine judgments. These judgments were like the flood in the days of Noah: "The windows of heaven were opened; the fountains of the deep were broken up; the waters increased; the waters prevailed and increased mightily; the waters *prevailed mightily, mightily* upon the earth, and all the high mountains that are under the whole heavens were covered. Fifteen cubits did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." As the waters of the flood wiped off from the face of the earth every living being, so the ten plagues swept away all the props of Egypt, and just so here, by successive judgments, God completely sweeps away all the props of Satan's usurped kingdom. Whatever the meaning of the symbols, "earth, sea, rivers and fountains, sun, the throne of the beast, the great river Euphrates, the air," on which in succession the bowls of wrath were poured, they represent exhaustively the whole resources of Satan's kingdom under its apostate forms of a Holy Roman Empire, its Papal head, and its harlot counterfeit church. While we may not be dogmatic in the interpretation of these symbols, the meanings given are the expression of sincere and thoughtful judgment.

2. Any student must be struck with the correspondence, in part, between the events under the trumpets and

under the bowls of wrath, particularly where the apostasy poisoned the fountains and dimmed the sun. So in just the same place here the lightning will strike.

3. "Har-Magedon"—verse 16. *Literally,* this compound word means "the hill of Megiddo." *Geographically,* it overlooks the great plain of Esdraelon, near the middle of the Mediterranean coast of Palestine. *Historically,* on account of its strategic position, it has been the decisive battleground of the ages for the fate of that country. Here Joshua conquered. Here, in the times of the Judges, Barak and Deborah won their decisive victory over Sisera (Judges iv, v), and Gideon his signal triumph over the Midianites (Judges vii). Here Saul lost his life and kingdom (I Samuel, xxxi, 8), and here good Josiah lost his life in battle with the Egyptians, which called forth an ordinance for lamentation by Jeremiah and the people (II Chronicles xxxv, 24, 25). And this great mourning for Josiah suggested to Zechariah the greater penitential mourning of the Jewish people which will lead to their salvation in a later day (Zechariah xii, 10-xiii, 1). This same valley was the battlefield of the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Antioch for the supremacy of the Holy Land, and for Saracen and Crusader after their day, and the scene of many struggles since. *Prophetically,* in the Old Testament is it equivalent to Joel's great battle in the valley of Jehoshaphat: "Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision" (Joel iii, 1-17)? and Zechariah's great war for the recovery of Spiritual Jerusalem (Zechariah xiv, 2-15), and Daniel's great battlefield (Daniel xi, 45-xii, 1), and Isaiah's blood-stained hero (Isaiah lxiii, 1-6)?

Prophetically in this book are the parallel passages, the great vintage (xiv, 17-20), the war of Armageddon (xvi, 14-16), and the great victory preceding and intro-

ducing the Millennium (xix, 10-21)? With the literal, geographical and historical backgrounds we have no concern except to find the symbolic imagery. The prophetic meaning from the symbols we must gather from the four Old Testament passages and the three New Testament passages cited.

Exegesis of Chapter XVI

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go ye and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth. And the first went and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast and that worshipped his image."

Note first that this judgment finds its symbol in the sixth plague on Egypt, the plague of the boils and ulcers. And also note that, as here, the wrath was poured on the "earth," and the victims are those who worshipped the beast and wore his mark. So from xiii, 11-17, we have learned that the *earth*-beast with the voice of a dragon caused men to worship the image of the leopard-beast and to receive his mark. In the Egyptian plague, the body was afflicted, but what means it here? Here it must mean some ulceration of mind and soul, a spiritual inflammation causing exquisite torment. One may not define too confidently just what state of mind fulfils this prophecy. But we will not be far afield if we refer it to that mental disquietude and spiritual unrest which come to all idolaters when their delusions are scattered by exposure of the false objects of worship, and the torments of remorse when seeing that they have been blinded and enslaved in turning away from the service and worship of the true God. Intense despair of spirit

follows such disenchantment when the mind at last beholds the entire system of counterfeit religion to be earthly, sensual, devilish. The best illustration I know is the ruined Zelica's shriek of despair when Mokanna lifted his veil and let her see what a foul, hideous demon he was.

"And the second poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, even the things that were in the sea."

Out of the "sea" came the leopard-beast (xiii, 2). "The many waters" upon which the harlot sat are defined as "peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues" (xvii, 1-15). Wrath poured on the sea then must mean God's judgment on a politico-religious government, a union of church and state whose ecclesiastical head dominates the many subject nations. That kind of a government is Satan's masterpiece. It is essential to the prevalence of the Papal power. It is the water of life in the Papal garden; turn it into blood and the garden becomes a desert. If this line of thought be correct, the interpretation may be applied to the action of all nations that finally repel the supremacy of the Romanist hierarchy over either their national or ecclesiastical affairs. For example, one emperor of Germany went, on Papal demand, to Canossa and put his neck under the foot of the Pope, but Bismarck, referring to William III, said, "This emperor will not go to Canossa." Or, it would apply to the weakening of the nations strictly Romanist, as Spain is and France was, compared with the increase in power and influence of non-Romanist nations.

In other words, as expressed in chapter xvii, verses 13, 16, the ten kingdoms which at first had "one mind," to give their power and authority unto the beast, "to make war on the Lamb," these later "shall hate the har-

lot and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

John Bunyan, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," represents his pilgrims as passing by the mouth of a cave from which two old, decrepit giants, "Pagan and Pope," glared at them in impotent rage, saying, "You will never stop this going on a pilgrimage until more of you be burned," but their powers to burn had passed away. The nations now refused to be the executors of ecclesiastical anathemas.

As in the analogue the turning of the Nile—the very life of Egypt—into blood broke for the time being the power of Pharaoh, so when this unholy alliance of church and state becomes as a dead man's blood, blood that would no longer flow, governmental persecution for conscience' sake received a shock from which it has never fully recovered. The ecclesiastical disposition to burn "heretics" still remains, but the states are no longer subservient. So far as the principle is involved, this applies to all persecuting states, whether Pagan, Papal, Greek, Protestant or Mahometan. The divine judgment is on the whole business, no matter under what name. The class will note the power of the expression, "the blood of a dead man"; the outward form remains, but the inward arterial current has congealed.

"And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters, and it became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: Righteous art thou who art and who wert, thou Holy One, because thou didst thus judge; for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood thou hast given them to drink: they are worthy. And I heard the altar saying: Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

Here we must recall, from viii, 10, 11, that the second effect of the apostasy, under the symbol of a star called Wormwood, representing an apostate clergy, yet burning as a lamp, representing an apostate church, was the poisoning of a third part of the rivers and fountains, which was there interpreted to mean the sources of thought and life. The judgment now follows the poison. The imagery again comes, but in a different direction, from the first plague on Egypt. That miracle worked in two directions: (1) The Nile, worshipped as a god, became corrupt and death-breeding through conversion to blood; (2) All drinking water in the canals, reservoirs and house vessels became unusable.

The thought of this bowl of wrath, following the second direction of the miracle, is that as by corruption of religious thought, the minds of men have been turned to persecutions, then by so much as they have shed blood shall they be made to drink blood. The punishment comes in kind.

"And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who hath the power over these plagues, and they repented not to give him glory."

Recalling the fourth trumpet (viii, 12) we there found the third effect of the apostasy was to dim the sources of light, particularly the third part of the sun. We there interpreted the sun to be the symbol of Christ, and the dimming of the light to be a substitution for Christ in His expiation (by the mass) and in His mediation (by the Virgin Mary), and in His Vicar (by the Pope). Now again the judgment follows the form of the apostasy. God in Christ is salvation. God out of Christ is a consuming fire. If His light be rejected, His heat

scorches. Moses very vividly presents the thought in his farewell address to Israel. If you turn away from Jehovah, everything intended for a blessing will become a curse: "Jehovah will smite thee with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew: and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. Jehovah shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day and shalt have no assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would it were even, and at even thou shalt say, Would it were morning! for the fear of thy heart which thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." (Deuteronomy xxviii, 22-24, 66-67.) Indeed, all of that great chapter of Deuteronomy from verse 15 to the end makes good collateral reading for this sixteenth chapter.

"And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened, and they gnawed their tongues for pain and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works."

As Christ reigns from Mount Zion symbolic of the true church, so Satan reigns from Babylon, symbolic of the counterfeit church. We see in the next chapter the harlot woman riding the beast, and her mystic name is Babylon. The judgment here falls on the hierarchy resting on a union of church and state. Its ancient power is stripped away; confidence in its holiness is lost; the world marvels that it was once so glorified and its blasphemous pretensions recognized.

"And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrise."

Here we must recall the historical background which suggests imagery. There was a real Babylon, ancient foe to national Israel. It was situated on both sides of the Euphrates, which constituted its reliance for defence. Your attention has been called in the preliminary observations to the method employed by the armies of Cyrus in diverting the waters through canals reaching around the city on both sides, so that through its empty channel they might enter the city and capture it. Both Jeremiah and Revelation confirm the disputed account of Xenophon. But our concern just now is to interpret the mystic Euphrates.

The author believes it to signify all that mighty conflux of sentiment, superstition and false doctrine erected to support the Romanist pretensions. Through many centuries by schools, monasteries, nunneries, diplomacies and other means, this sentiment had been created and had supported the mystic city. It was the counter-teaching, culminating in the Reformation, which dried up this Euphrates.

"And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits, as it were frogs; for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God the Almighty."

If we have been correct in our interpretation in the drying up of the Euphrates by the Reformation teaching, then those symbolic frogs represent in some way the

expedients adopted by the Romanist hierarchy to counteract the Reformation and enable it once more to make a world-fight for the supremacy. From history we will know what these expedients have been.

There was first of all the pretended ecumenical Council of Trent for a definite statement of the Romanist faith. Ecumenical and Catholic mean literally about the same thing, that is, universal as opposed to local. This council was not ecumenical in fact or in spirit. The vast Greek ecclesiasticism, nor Protestant denominations, nor any of the age-long dissidents from the Romanist idea of the church, were represented. Over those actually present and participating, the Italian representatives of the Pope completely dominated. This Tridentine confession of faith, while divisive in some respects, was yet consolidating in another direction. It drew a distinct line of cleavage and set up a definite standard around which its followers might rally, and did, with its attendant catechism, erect a strong barrier against further Protestant conquest. This was followed up later by Papal encyclicals, resulting in a complete system of Mariolatry, and in 1870 by the Vatican Council declaring the absolute supremacy and infallibility of the Pope.

Now, we might fairly identify as the three frogs: (1) The declaration of the Council of Trent; (2) the declarations of the Vatican Council; (3) the papal encyclicals and syllabuses, particularly those completing the system of Mariolatry. To those doctrinal declarations we may add as enforcers of the decrees two mighty factors:

1. The Inquisition, which long preceded the Reformation as a heresy court, tending to prevent the very spirit of the Reformation, became afterwards in some countries, particularly Belgium and Holland, the bloodiest tribunal

known in the annals of history. The tools of the Inquisition have become rusty now.

2. But by far the most persistent and aggressive factor of Romanism, defined above, was the organization, under Papal sanction, of the Jesuits, founded by Ignatius Loyola. This compact, secret, iron organization, obeying only the Pope and its general, followed the outbreak of the Reformation, and has not only proved to be the strongest buttress of Romanism, but its most potential propagandist. Its greatest fields of operation have been: (1) Missions; (2) diplomacy; (3) tutoring the children of the great. I repeat that modern Romanism, defined in three particulars above, and led by the Jesuits, has aligned its forces for a world-wide conflict, here symbolically called the "war of Har-Magedon," the consideration of which must be left to a subsequent chapter.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

ON THE PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

1. How does xv, 1, present the plagues, and xv, 2-4, present the triumph of the saints; and xv, 5-8, present the agencies employed?
2. What the Old Testament analogue which suggests most of the imagery in xv and xvi?
3. What the Old Testament analogue of xvi, 12, and what historian gives the account of using the Euphrates for conquest of Babylon? And what Old Testament prophecy had forecast the history?
4. What the relation between the "seven thunders" (x, 4); the "seven plagues" of chapter xv, and the "seven bowls of wrath" of chapter xv, 7, and xvi?

EXEGESIS

5. At xv, 1, in what sense are these plagues "the last," and in them "the wrath of God finished"?
6. Give briefly the Old Testament history which furnishes the symbols of these plagues.
7. Explain from Old Testament history the imagery of the "sea of glass mingled with fire," at xv, 2.

8. As this triumph of the saints, at xv, 2-4, is here given by anticipation, where does it appear in detail?

9. Explain the collocation of the Song of Moses with the Song of the Lamb at xv, 3. What the resemblance between the Song of Moses, Exodus xv, the song here and the later song in chapter xix?

10. At xv, 5, explain the words "temple" and "testimony," and then tell what they symbolize and what the relation to the seven plagues.

11. How does it appear that angels carrying the plagues and bowls of wrath indicate human agency?

12. Explain the "smoke" that filled the sanctuary, and why in this particular case none might enter the sanctuary until the plagues were finished, and prove this from the next chapter, and thereby show the plagues are *punitive* and not chastisements.

General Observations on Chapter xvi

13. Repeat the general idea of interpretation suggested by the analogue Exodus i, 15.

14. Show how a great preceding judgment is like in its *completeness* to the Egyptian plagues, and apply both to the case in hand.

15. What symbolic words in xvi show that these plagues strike the whole circle of environment?

16. What correspondence, in part, do you find between the trumpets of chapter viii and the bowls of wrath in xvi, and why?

17. The Har-Magedon of xvi, 16—explain it literally, geographically, historically and prophetically.

18. With what part of this have we present concern?

(N. B.—The exegesis of the war of Har-Magedon reserved till next lecture.)

Exegesis of Chapter xvi, 1-14

19. Verses 1-2, what plague of Egypt the symbol here?

20. Explain pouring this bowl of wrath on the *earth.*

21. The Egyptian plague afflicted the body: give the meaning here and illustrate from Tom Moore's "Lalla Rookh."

22. Verse 3: Explain at some length the pouring of this bowl of wrath on the *sea:* apply and illustrate the interpretation.

23. Quote and show application of passage from John Bunyan.

24. What Egyptian plague the analogue here? Apply the meaning broadly and explain the significance of "the blood of a dead man."

25. What the first effect of the apostasy smitten by this plague?

26. Verses 4-7: What the second effect of the apostasy given in viii, 10, 11, and show how the judgment here corresponds.
27. In what two directions did the first Egyptian plague work, and which one considered here in the meaning of the symbol?
28. Verses 8, 9: Recalling the fourth trumpet (viii, 10), what the third effect of the apostasy, the meaning of the symbol there, and the nature and fitness of the corresponding judgment here?
29. Illustrate from farewell address of Moses.
30. Verses 10, 11: Explain the throne of the beast.
31. Verse 12: What the historic background furnishing this symbolism, and what the meaning of the Euphrates here, and how brought about, and how long unshaken, and then by what dried up?
32. Verses 13, 14: In general terms the meaning of the three frogs? And the purpose?
33. In specific terms?
34. What two factors greatly helped to enforce these decrees?
35. In what ways have the Jesuits most helped Rome?

XV

THE WAR OF ARMAGEDDON

Revelation XVI, 14-21, with Brief Survey of Chapter XVII

ORDINARILY it would be out of proportion to devote a whole chapter to a few verses, but occasionally we find a single paragraph so pregnant with meaning that it cannot be unfolded in a few words. Particularly is there a call for careful and extended treatment when the imagery of the paragraph makes such an appeal to the imagination that the ignorant and unwary, without helm, chart or compass, drift away into seas of fanciful interpretation, losing all practical benefit in the sonorous roll of words, or in the highly wrought figures of speech. Many a preacher, beguiled by the sound of words, has made shipwreck of a sermon and bewildered his congregation by attempting to expound, without understanding them, texts like these: "Garments rolled in blood," "Blood up to the bridles of the horses," "War of the great day of the Almighty God at Armageddon," "Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision," and certain people like to hear sermons on these blood and thunder texts. I am quite sure that none of Creasy's "Decisive Battles of the World," nor all of them put together, have taken such a hold upon the imagination of the people as the battle at Armageddon. Even Mr. Roosevelt, in a recent presidential campaign, insisted that he was fighting the battle of Armageddon.

2. My second observation is that, whatever the passage means, the context limits the application to the final struggle between the true church and the counterfeit church. It has no other application.

3. Whatever the passage means, it must precede the Millennium, and prepare the way for it, and consequently it has no reference to Satan's last struggle for supremacy as set forth after the Millennium in Revelation xx, 7-10. Nor is it a reference to the great judgment day described in the twentieth chapter of Revelation from the 11th to the 15th verses.

4. Particularly I would have you know that this gathering of the nations together in the war of the great day of God the Almighty, at the place called Armageddon, results, as expressly stated, from the three unclean spirits that went forth out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. It is a gathering under their influence; another gathering under some other influence is not to be considered.

5. You must know, if there be any truth in the interpretation given in a preceding chapter, that the general purpose of the sending forth of these three unclean spirits was to rally and solidify the Romanist hosts after they were shattered by the outbreak of the Reformation, and to establish a bar to the further progress of that Reformation, and to supply means of war with which to regain for Rome absolute supremacy over all states and all religions. That was the purpose. It is not, indeed, the last battle between Satan's kingdom and the Kingdom of our Lord, as we shall see later, but it is the last war between the true church and the counterfeit church. So stated and limited, it is a fight to the finish. And when this war is over, never more will the woman in purple

and scarlet re-appear in the history of mankind. Satan will come again in two more wars, but that harlot, drunk with the blood of the saints, will disappear forever.

6. The next observation is that while the imagery of war supplies the symbols, we must be careful not to interpret the symbol literally. It is a spiritual conflict, figuratively set forth in the terms of war and blood, as when Paul uses the terms of the Isthmian Games and conflicts in the arenas of the Greek and Roman amphitheatres to set forth spiritual conflicts. No sane expositor would interpret Paul's language literally.

The interpretation of the preceding chapters gives us the wilderness period of the church, from A.D. 250 to 1510, and that the outbreak of the Reformation commencing early in the sixteenth century gave a severe and lasting shock to the Papal hierarchy. And the sending out of these three unclean spirits now is to recover from that shock of the Reformation. If the nations are to be gathered together for that purpose, and if you lose sight of the end in view, you fail to interpret the three unclean spirits. We found in that chapter that three expedients were adopted by the Romanists to rally and solidify their own people, to bar the further progress of the Reformation and to re-establish their former claims to absolute supremacy over civil governments and all religions, and when we look in history to find some fulfilment of the work done by these unclean spirits, we find just three things; I confess I am able to find no other things as the result of their work.

First, the declaration of the Council of Trent, with its attendant profession of faith drawn up by the Pope, and its catechism on the doctrines, drawn up under his direction. That is the first thing they did to bar the

further progress of Protestantism that broke out earlier in the century. Now in 1563 the first unclean spirit, the first frog, brought out his work.

Second, the dogmatic decrees of the Vatican Council, held in A.D. 1870, setting forth the infallibility of the Pope.

Third, the *ex-cathedra* utterances of the so-called infallible Pope, particularly in the various utterances concerning the Virgin Mary, who is declared to be free from the taint of original sin, and second, from actual sin; third, her assumption in heaven; and fourth, her being made the Queen of Heaven. As the Pope expressed in one of his encyclical letters: "Mary is the fountain of all grace, and the only hope of salvation."

Fourth: Another one of these documents, issued by the Pope in 1863, entitled the "Syllabus of Errors," that which he called errors in the teaching of science, errors in statesmanship, errors in doctrines, enumerating them and denouncing them with anathemas. Then, again in 1885, he sent out another encyclical letter concerning the Christian constitution of states, making all states and all governments subordinate to the Pope. Then another encyclical letter in 1888, in which he expressly condemns "modern Liberties"; liberty of worshipping according to the dictates of the conscience, liberty of speech, liberty of the press, the liberty in teaching by the states—for instance, having a free school system,—the liberty of conscience—that your conscience must be put under the guidance of the Pope and the confessors. These are the distinguishing characteristics of modern Romanism, commencing in that Council of Trent held in 1563 and culminating in 1888, I say, that make modern Romanism, to wit: Papal infallibility, Mariolatry, Supremacy over nations.

Fifth: The worship of Mary, making her, instead of the Holy Spirit, the mediator between the sinner and the

Saviour. They have drawn pictures of Christ in the background, angry, with Mary standing between Him and the sinner, and softening His wrath toward the sinner. I repeat: The decrees of the Council of Trent, the dogmatic decrees of the Vatican Council, and the various Papal encyclical letters whose authority rests on his own declared infallibility, these did rally the Roman forces; they did bar, in certain states, the progress of the Reformation; they did make the battle-line upon which Rome seeks to regain absolute supremacy over all states, religions, and all consciences.

We have seen in a previous chapter that for quite a while the Inquisition, established long before this time, was a mighty factor in enforcing these decisions. And we have found that the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, was the next mightiest factor in the propagandism of this new delineation of doctrines. Now, I say that the object of all these expedients was to gather the nations in hostile array against what has been set forth as the true church and the pure gospel, and the result is a conflict, not a single battle, but a war. The Greek word is not "battle," but is "war," called here the war of the great day of God the Almighty, at the place called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

The interposition of God is said here in our lesson to be a coming of the Lord: "Behold, I come as a thief in the night" (15th verse of our lesson). It is not His final advent, but it is His coming in judgment upon this counterfeit church. Now, your lesson shows that the expression of His judgment in this outpouring of this seventh bowl of wrath, and the symbols which set forth the degree of the wrath are various: Lightnings, voices and thunders, a great earthquake such as was not since there were men upon the earth; a great hail, every hail-

stone weighing about a talent (a hundred pounds). Maybe some of you think that is too big for a hailstone, but I will tell you that hailstones have fallen as big as a small house, weighing many tons. Hailstones fell near Lisbon, one of which would sink a ship in the harbor. So you need not get scared at a hundred pound hailstone.

Now, the results of the wrath are said to be:

First: The utter overthrow of the mystic city of Babylon the Great. When the Reformation broke out it received a shock, that was the earthquake, and a tenth part of the city was destroyed. But here all the parts fell away from each other; that is total destruction.

Second: The downfall of the cities of the states of the supporting nations.

Third: The falling away of every island and mountain stronghold.

I am just giving you the symbols here. The completeness of the overthrow is expressed in a voice from the throne: "It is done." "He said: Let there be light, and there was light." Or they recall the words of Christ on the cross: "It is finished"; the expiation is finished; nothing more to be done to it throughout eternity. So, when this last bowl of wrath is poured out on this mystic city of Babylon, it is done; that lightning never has to strike again. Our paragraph puts into one compact sentence the downfall of the mystic city of Babylon, but both of the following chapters, xvii and xviii, are employed to identify this great city, what it is, and then to give the detail of its destruction. We may look to the exposition of these chapters for many things omitted here, and content ourselves for the present with this observation:

The lightning, the thunders, the earthquake, the hail, are all natural phenomena used figuratively to express the overpowering spiritual forces.

Second, the weapons of warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds.

Third, the blood and carnage are symbols of spiritual results; it is a war of light against darkness, of truth against error, of a pure gospel against a false gospel.

Fourth, the inner meaning of the whole paragraph is that no millennial triumph can ever come to this earth until that great apostasy, in its persecuting union of church and state, in its persecuting idolatrous hierarchy, in its blasphemous assumption, has passed away.

The confusion among the commentators in their interpretation of the war of the great day of God the Almighty, arises largely from a disregard of the context. Our interpretation puts into one section everything from the twelfth chapter and 1st verse to the nineteenth chapter and 10th verse, and the theme of that entire section is the conflict between the true church of our Lord, regarded as an institution, and Satan's counterfeit church, regarded as an institution. This conflict does not last until the end of the world, but its culmination does prepare the way for the introduction of the Millennium. The wrath of God poured out on the apostate church, while complete in itself, is not the wrath which falls on Satan and his followers after the Millennium (xx, 7-10), nor is it the final wrath of the General Judgment (xx, 11-15).

In general terms this book discusses four wars conducted by Satan against the Kingdom of God. First, he uses the Pagan Roman Empire by its persecutions to drive the true church into the wilderness, culminating about A. D. 250; and he was defeated because, as you will recall, the Pagan Roman Empire like a burning volcano was turned over into the sea. His second war was from the same centre, the city of Rome. He constructs

a so-called Holy Roman Empire, a politico-religious persecuting empire, with a Pope instead of a Cæsar as the head, and with the woman in purple and scarlet as the counterfeit church.

Now, we followed that war in the first campaign, up to the Reformation in the beginning of the 16th century, and the second campaign commences with our lesson here with the sending forth of the three unclean spirits to break the force of the Reformation and to gather together the nations against the true church. By looking into history as I have told you, we are unable to find but three expedients that those three unclean spirits or demons could have devised for that purpose. These three I have described to you as the so-called ecumenical Council of Trent, the dogmatic decrees of the so-called ecumenical Vatican Council, and the several Papal utterances whose authority rested on the claimed Papal infallibility. These are the three things in history that constitute modern Romanism; nothing else in history can be found to fulfil those 13th and 14th verses of the sixteenth chapter about the three unclean spirits going forth.

What, then, is the war of the great day of God the Almighty culminating at "the place called in Hebrew Har-Magedon"? Laying aside all figures of speech, it is the war against the declarations of the Council of Trent, against the dogmatic decrees of the Vatican Council, against the various Papal utterances embodied in various encyclical letters, and in the Syllabus of Errors.

In Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom," partly in volume one, but mainly in volume two, you may find both the history, the exposition, and the text of all these documents, and they do define modern Romanism. They draw the line of cleavage, and statesmen of Europe and America recognize them to-day as the hardest problems

of statecraft. Bismarck found it so; Gladstone found it so, and wrote one of the most remarkable books of the age, to wit: "Vaticanism." Our presidents find it so, and in my opinion our last two presidents tripped right on that point, as I think I could prove. These United States, with all their territorial possessions, are to-day at the place "called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." The war is now on, in the press, in the schools, in the municipal, county, state, and national elections, in the pulpits, in the Congress and before the courts. There can be, I repeat, no Millennium until the battle, on these definite lines drawn by Romanism, is fought to a finish. The preacher, the politician, the statesman, who has not these books that I have named should sell his coat, if need be, and buy them, and when he has bought them should study them profoundly, should study volume one of Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom" from page 83 to 191, and volume two from page 96 to 271, and then from page 555 to 602. It would take up twenty chapters to go over and give you the details of it, and you will never understand Armageddon, you will not even know the nature of the war, you will not know the chief obstruction in the way of the coming of the Millennium, unless you study them. The issue of that war closes up the second war of Satan. I told you that our book treated of four wars; that is the close of the second war. The third one will be found to commence with the 11th verse of the nineteenth chapter, and going on through that chapter. And in that war there will be fulfilled the remarkable prophecy of Isaiah lxiii, 1-6; Ezekiel xxxvi and xxxvii; Daniel xi, 45-xii, 1; Joel iii, 1-21; Zechariah xii, 1-xiii, 1; Romans xi, 11-31. And we must have a chapter on that because in it is involved the conversion of the whole Jewish nation in one day, which must come before the Millennium.

Now, the fourth and last war of Satan in this book is the one described in the twentieth chapter, 7th to 10th verses. Will you keep those wars distinct in your mind? First, the war using Pagan Rome as a persecutor; second, the war using Papal Rome as a persecutor; third, the war culminating in the salvation of the Jews; fourth, the war after the Millennium. They are all in this book.

As the whole of the following chapter simply identifies and defines the scarlet woman, and the following chapter gives the details of the downfall, I will put the questions:

1. Who is the woman in purple and scarlet riding upon the beast in this chapter? That is the Roman hierarchy, the counterfeit church as an institution.

2. What is meant by the many waters upon which she sits? The last of the chapter tells you that the waters mean many nations, tongues, kindred and people.

3. What is the meaning of this woman being found in the wilderness? We found that radiant woman in the wilderness several chapters back, and this woman was not in the wilderness. It is the scarlet woman that is in the wilderness now. That means that her power is taken away, and she is ready to receive her doom.

4. What is meant by being full of the names of blasphemy? Our previous chapter has described them. It is blasphemy for a man to assume to be infallible; it is blasphemy for a man to claim to be the head of the church; it is blasphemy for a man to claim to be Christ's vicar on earth; it is blasphemy to say that the prayers and manipulations of the officiating priest actually create God in changing the bread and wine into the real flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is blasphemy to worship the wafer as it is carried along in a procession, called the "Procession of the Host"; it is blasphemy to address a woman as the "Fountain of all grace and the

only hope of salvation," and so I could go on for hours telling you the blasphemies.

5. What is meant by the cup of abomination, the unclean things of her fornication? I have told you that fornication, spiritual fornication or adultery, means idolatry. It was idolatry for the national Israel, claiming to be the wife of Jehovah, to worship idols. Now this woman mixes in her cup various abominations, and she makes the kings of the earth drink out of this cup.

6. What is the mystic name of this woman? " Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and the abominations of the earth." As there was a historic Babylon on the Euphrates, here this woman in the last verse of the chapter is expressly declared to be a city. There is a mystic Babylon, this woman in purple and scarlet, who is also a city.

7. What is meant by her being drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs? It means that from the constitution of that hierarchy to the present time she has used the thumbscrew, the rack, the dungeon, and the ax, and other forms of torture in putting to death the people who worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. The bloodiest pages in the annals of time record the martyrdoms done under the directions of this church. When on St. Bartholomew's Eve, Admiral Coligny of France and so many thousands of other Huguenots were put to death in the city of Paris, as soon as the news got to Rome the bells of the Cathedral were set to ringing, and the whole city was full of the chimes because the streets of Paris were reeking red with blood of the martyrs. They sang a " Te Deum Laudamus " to celebrate this atrocious wholesale murder.

8. What is the beast upon which she sits? I told you

that that beast was the new government that Satan caused to rise up to take the place of Pagan Rome, the Holy Roman Empire. That is the beast.

9. What is meant by saying that the beast had seven heads? The explanation is this, as you will see lower down, that five of these heads have fallen, one is, and another is to be, and the eighth will be of the seventh. Now, what are these seven heads? I have already given them to you, Egypt and Assyria, that had passed away before Daniel's time, and then four, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. As he saw them, that makes six. Five of them had passed away, but in John's time the sixth had not passed away. When it did soon pass away came the seventh, the union of church and state in the Holy Roman Empire, and the eighth was of the seventh, that was the Papal head, which was part of the seventh.

10. What is meant by the ten horns? The chapter tells you that the ten horns are ten kingdoms that had not yet risen in John's time. Pagan Rome was not yet disintegrated, but it will be disintegrated in a few centuries, and out of its ruins will come up the ten kingdoms. And these kingdoms for quite a while will support the woman in purple and scarlet and then these kingdoms will turn and rend the woman in purple and scarlet.

All the latter half of this chapter tells exactly what the first half means and next time we will take up the details of the fall of Babylon.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Why devote a chapter to the paragraph xvi, 14-21?
2. Does the paragraph describe a war or a battle?
3. What the name of the war?
4. What the cause of the war? (Read verses 13 and 14.)
5. What the date and occasion of the beginning of the war?

6. What the expedients devised by the three unclean spirits to restore Romanist supremacy, and in what books do you find the history, exposition and text of these documents, giving volume and pages?

7. What, then, is this war?

8. How do you account for the confusion of commentators in interpreting the paragraph?

9. What the symbolic name of the place of the conflict, and why that name chosen as a symbol?

10. Is this war now on?

11. Is it on in this country, and if so in what arenas?

12. What, then, the real place of conflict symbolized by Har-Magedon?

Answer: Anywhere in the world where the battle rages.

13. Are the weapons carnal or spiritual?

14. Between what two institutions the war, and to what must the interpretation of the paragraph, whatever its meaning, be strictly limited?

15. How is the divine interposition represented, and does that refer to our Lord's final advent? (See verse 15.)

16. What symbol represents the divine wrath?

17. What is meant by "the air" on which the wrath is poured?

Answer: The air represents general public opinion and thought concerning the expedients devised by the unclean spirits, and implies that the judgment of the world condemns and rejects them.

18. What symbols express results of pouring out the bowl of wrath on the air?

Answer: Lightnings, voices and thunders; (2) a great earthquake such as the men of earth never saw before; (3) a great hail-storm.

19. What one symbol expresses the wrath on the mystic Babylon, or counterfeit church?

Answer: "The cup of the wine of God's wrath."

20. In the first campaign of the war between the two ecclesiastical institutions, what the result of the earthquake to the counterfeit church occasioned by the Reformation, and the result of this earthquake?

Answer: (For answer compare xi, 13, and xiv, 13, first clause xiv, 20.)

21. Concerning the hailstones, how much avoirdupois weight each hailstone?

22. What the largest hailstones known to history?

23. Where the true church when the counterfeit church commences the war on it, and where the counterfeit church at the close of the war, just before the final judgment falls? And what does this imply? (For answer consult xii, 6, and xvii, 3, which imply a complete reversal of public opinion concerning the two institutions.)

24. Describe the counterfeit church.

Answer: A great harlot (xvii, 1, and all of xvii, 4-6).

25. What the meaning of the symbol "a harlot"?

Answer: One claiming to be the spouse of the Lamb, who turns to the worship of idols.

26. What the meaning of "mother of harlots"?

Answer: Her children also worship idols.

27. What the meaning of "abominations"?

Answer: Another name for the perversions of the true worship of God.

28. What the meaning of the "golden cup in her hand"?

29. What the meaning of her gorgeous array in xvii, 4?

Answer: This implies the great wealth secured from the world, by Peter's pence, gifts of the states, bequests of the dying, sale of indulgences, charges exacted for services at birth, marriage, death and purgatorial intercession, etc., and her pompous state and imposing ritual.

30. Relate a pertinent and illustrative incident.

Answer: It is related that one of the popes, after exhibiting his treasures to a friend, remarked: "Great change this from Peter's day, who said, 'Silver and gold have I none'"; to whom the friend replied: "We have the gold which Peter had not, but have we Peter's power to make the lame walk?" (See Acts iii, 6, 7.)

31. What the meaning of "many waters" on which the harlot of xvii, 1, sitteth? (For answer see xvii, 15.)

32. What the meaning of the beast on which the woman rides in xvii, 3?

Answer: The governmental union of church and state, with the church on top.

33. Cite historical proof of the blasphemies of the names of which this beast (xvii, 3) is full.

34. Explain the historical seven heads of the beast (xvii, 3), why Daniel mentions only four, how five had fallen before John's time, what the seventh and what the eighth, and how the eighth is of the seventh.

35. Explain the first clause of xvii, 8.

Answer: Pagan Rome, the sixth, was but will soon cease with its Cæsar head, but will re-appear as the Holy Roman Empire with a Papal head, and it too will go into perdition.

36. Explain the "ten horns," xvii, 3. (See xvii, 12.)

Answer: These are the ten kingdoms formed out of the disintegrated elements of Pagan Rome, but all united in supporting the union of church and state.

37. How do you account for the change of attitude in these kingdoms toward the counterfeit church as set forth in xvii, 3, 13, 16?

Answer: Kings are willing to support the beast, i.e., the union of church and state with the king on top as head of church and state in his own realm, but will resist a Papal head of state and church in his realm.

38. What the mystic name of the harlot?

39. What the real meaning of the woman? (See xvii, 18.)
40. What classic authors refer to Rome as the "seven-hilled city"?

41. These historic seven hills on which Rome is built symbolize, according to the interpretation, seven world-empires: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome, Papal Rome. Why connect so far back in interpretation?

Answer: Because all fought the kingdom of God and the underlying principles were the same in every case; because our lesson tells us that in John's time five had fallen.

XVI

THE WAR OF ARMAGEDDON (CONTINUED)

Revelation XVIII—XIX, 10

THIS chapter closes up the longest section in the book, the war between the true church and the counterfeit church. In the preceding study I gave you but a little exposition of chapter xvii, because that chapter only identifies the woman in purple and scarlet, and because it is self-explanatory. The latter half tells the meaning of the first half.

We now consider, with more detail, the effect of the outpouring of the last bowl of wrath upon the woman in purple and scarlet, that is the final destruction of Romanism as the counterfeit church. Note carefully the change from a woman to a city. "I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority, and the earth was lightened with his glory, and he cried with a mighty voice, saying: Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great, and is become the habitation of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." That is the announcement sent from heaven, in the brilliance of glory and the highest extent of authority, of the doom of the mystic Babylon. The imagery of this chapter is borrowed, even to the very words, from the following prophecies of the Old Testament: Isaiah xiii, 19-22, which describes the downfall of the historic Babylon on the Euphrates. Then in Isaiah

xxxiv, 9-15, is described the utter destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then Jeremiah, in the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters, describes the destruction of the historic Babylon. Zephaniah, in the second chapter, commencing at the 13th verse, describes the destruction of Nineveh. Ezekiel, in the twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters, describes the destruction of Tyre, and from these prophecies we get the very word employed in this chapter, as imagery transferred to the mystic Babylon. I have the space to recall to you but one of them, the first one cited, thirteenth chapter of Isaiah and 19th verse: "And Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and ostriches shall dwell there; and wild goats [or demons] shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." The same language is employed by the other prophets to whom I refer, and exactly corresponding to the language which I have just read, "is become a habitation of demons, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird." That simply means, that as the ancient Babylon, after its destruction, was never more inhabited, and wild beasts whelped in its palaces, so when God smites the mystic Babylon, the counterfeit church of Romanism, it will be wiped off the face of the earth.

Read again, now from the 3d verse: "For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are

fallen, and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness." That is the cause or reason of the destruction of the mystic Babylon; that her influence was so corrupt with the nations of the earth that she caused its kings to join in her idolatries and blasphemies, and through the merchandise of her wantonness, that is, all that part of the commerce which relates to the things employed in her service, on that account it is to be swept away.

Read the 4th verse: "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that you have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." That is to me a very precious verse. It shows that God never destroys the righteous; that if the righteous have been associating with the evil, before the judgment falls on the evil the righteous are called out. We saw that in the case of Sodom: the angels took hold of Lot and dragged him out of the city, saying, "We cannot destroy this city while you are in it." We saw the same thing when Korah and his family were about to be swallowed up by an earthquake on account of great sin. Everybody else was required to move away from him, to get away from the dangerous place where they stood, because the ground on which their feet rested would yawn, crack open, and they would be engulfed. We find precisely these words addressed to the old Babylon. Jeremiah uses the words precisely. A great many of the Israelites and people of Judah were in captivity in Babylon, and the prophet says: "Come forth out of her, my people, that ye receive not her plagues."

We see the same language when Jerusalem was destroyed. Jesus said to His disciples: "When you see

the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, then you flee to the mountains, and share not in the doom that is coming upon Jerusalem," through the armies of Titus. You still see the same thing, on a much grander scale, at the end of the world. The earth cannot be destroyed by fire while any Christian is on it; their bodies are raised, they are caught up in the clouds, and when no living Christian and the dust of no dead Christian is left on the earth, then the earth will be wrapped in fire.

Another pertinent paragraph is found in II Corinthians: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said: I dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a father, and you shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Nothwithstanding the evil of the system of Romanism, notwithstanding the heresy of its doctrines, there are multitudes of truly converted children of God on its church rolls. Some of the finest religious hymns, some of the sweetest and most precious expressions of the love of Christ, have come from the pens of individual Roman Catholics; they are God's children. Now, before this destruction falls on that counterfeit church, God will call out from it all of His true children. Every now and then there are secessions. Millions went out in the days of the Reformation; great multitudes of the old-

fashioned Catholics went out after the Council of Trent; they could not accept those decrees. All through history they have been going out. Some never were in, and I think we belong to that crowd. But I am speaking of those who were in, and I am glad when any of them come out.

In the 5th verse we read the reasons of this final sweeping judgment: "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." The language of the Bible on that point is very impressive. God does not strike until the measure of iniquity is full; but when it is full He strikes. The sins of the Canaanites got so rank that they smelt unto heaven, then God destroyed them root and branch; when Sodom's sin cried unto heaven, God swept it away without pity and without mercy. We get impatient, oftentimes, at God's patience, His long-suffering with evil, and we say: Why doesn't He hurl His lightning; why doesn't He strike down the wicked? God says: "Wait, I am giving everybody an opportunity for repentance. At the right time I will strike, and when I strike there will be no need to strike again. It will be complete." Whenever that time comes, God remembereth iniquities.

I preached a sermon once on this text: "When he maketh inquisition for sin, he remembereth." Men do evil because judgment is not speedily executed. But after a while God will make inquisition, that means a search like a sheriff with a search warrant. The day I preached that sermon I described God's coming to the sinner and entering into his heart and shining with the light of His truth into the most secret chambers of his soul, and unmasking, and revealing, and bringing out into the white light of infinite holiness every foul thing that man ever did: "When he maketh inquisition

for sin, he remembereth." That great sermon of Jonathan Edwards that started a series of meetings in which a quarter of a million people were converted, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," from the text: "Their feet shall slide in due time," applied this thought.

The 6th verse: "Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works; in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double." Now, I do not think the "double" there means twice as much. It is according to the old law of retaliation: "Like for like: an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; as ye judge ye shall be judged; as ye measured to others it shall be measured unto you." The punishment shall correspond to the sin. And now, as that iniquitous counterfeit church was drunk with the blood of the saints; as she filled her cup with idolatries, God gives her a cup to drink filled with His undiluted wrath. The punishment shall correspond to the sin. The same principle of righteousness is expressed in the next two verses.

"How much soever she glorified herself and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning; for she saith in her heart: I sit a queen and am not a widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore, in one day shall her plagues come, death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her." In other words, as led by her pride, she took the high seat and spoke great swelling words of blasphemy, and put her foot on the neck of kings and oppressed the saints, and relied upon her infallibility, saying: "I am a queen, I am not subject to the law, and no mourning shall come to me," so shall be the depth of her fall. It shall be as deep as her presumption was high.

9th and 10th verses: "And the kings of the earth

who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying: Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour is thy judgment come." This is copied directly from the prophets; in fact, nearly every word in this chapter is.

They had an agreement, the kings and the Romanist church: "You buttress me in my kingly authority, and I will buttress you in your Papal chair." There was a trade, a very convenient arrangement. Just like a municipal sin is committed by a grafter who offers to support a certain man for mayor or alderman, or chief of police, or some other civil office, on the condition: "You let me put my finger into the pie and take out my plum, and I don't care how many plums you take out."

11th verse: "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more," and this is her merchandise: "merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and all thyine wood [or sweet scented wood], and every vessel of ivory and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense, and ointment and frankincense, and wine and oil and fine flour, and wheat and cattle and sheep, and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and the souls of men."

Ezekiel twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters, foretelling the downfall of Tyre, represents all who lived by her merchandise as bewailing her. Understand that this merchandise here is not to be considered as merchandise in general, but is that part of the merchandise which was used up in supporting this counter-

feit church, or in its ceremonies, or vestments; there would be "Peter's pence" enough to build a cathedral; there would be the profit from the sale of indulgences, as when Tetzel travelled over Germany and sold the privilege of sins in the future as well as in the past for so much; then there were fees for officiating at birth, the marriage fees, and the fees to get your father or mother out of purgatory, fees for everything. Then there were the great donations given by the conscience-stricken dying, donations of lands, and large sums of money. It is related that on one occasion a Pope led a visiting friend into the treasure house of the Vatican, and showed him the silks and purple and laces and fine linen, opened the coffers and showed him the jewels, diamonds, pearls and rubies, the gold and silver; and said: "There has been a great change since the first Pope, Peter, for he said: 'Silver and gold have I none,'" and the friend remarked: "We have what Peter had not, and we have not what Peter had, for he could make the lame man walk without the silver and gold, and we cannot."

Of course, the commercial spirit will always "hurrah" for anything that makes trade. They will if it be whiskey; they will if it be prostitution; they will if it be idolatry, if you can only sell the images of the great goddess Diana and make a big pile of money by it. But when all that is broken up they will stand off and wail: "Alas, Babylon is fallen, and all of our trade is broken up."

But look at that last item, will you? "And merchandise in the bodies and in the souls of men." What was Luther when he went to Rome, and on bended knees climbed the stairway to find expiation of sin, but a slave? Slaves and the souls of men! And how joyously he leaped to his feet when he saw that man is justified in the sight of God by faith and not by works from condem-

nation forever, without dependence on any priest's. "I absolve thee"; God does the absolving. Slaves and the souls of men! Millions and millions have been slaves, slaves to the blindest superstitions, treasuring up the cut-off toe nails of some so-called saint, or putting in a vial or bottle the tears of some other saint, or preserving an image that seems to wink the eye. You might as well imitate the negro, who puts a rabbit's foot in his pocket for luck, or nails up a horseshoe to keep off the witches; it is the same principle, exactly. It is slavery, the worst form of slavery. Mental slavery is much worse than body slavery.

14th verse: "And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all." Now, when a man works hard and lives hard, it does not hurt if occasionally he eats short rations, but if one be pampered, feeding at a banquet every day, having every luxury in the world, then if God sweeps all of it away, and turns out that glutton barefooted and bankrupt, oh, how he feels it! Whenever that is the prop you lean on, and it breaks, then you are in a hard case. But if the spirit of happiness be in you, and not in the things about you, and you rest in the eternal joy of hope and peace and love, then the devil cannot bankrupt you; no money panic can make you a pauper. But notice the crowd that is weeping over the downfall, those who had shared in the profits of the idolatrous business.

Then look at the 20th verse, and see who rejoice: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her." She has passed her judgment on you, she imprisoned you, burnt you at the stake; through flames your

soul took its exodus to heaven. Now, up in heaven, look down and see your judgment, that they put on you, see it put on her. That is the crowd that rejoices every time an evil power is put down. The good people are glad; it is the evil people who are sad. Every nation that doeth righteousness maketh the righteous glad.

21st verse: "And a strong angel took up a stone, as it were a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all." Now, that is borrowed outright from Jeremiah. When he pronounced the doom on the ancient Babylon, he wrote it and said to one of his friends: "Go to Babylon and tie this writing to a great stone, and hurl it into the Euphrates, and as it sinks out of sight you say: Thus shall Babylon disappear forever." It is a very significant correspondence.

"And the voice of harpers and minstrels, and flute-players and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more in thee; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee, and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee." What a description of ruin! If you were to walk amidst the ruins of Palmyra or Karnac, or stand in the ruins of Nineveh or ancient Babylon, never hearing the laughter of a child, never seeing a friendly light shine in a window, never hearing a strain of music, but all desolation, and the only voice the voice of a wild beast, or the hoot of an owl, you would get a conception of the judgment that God sends upon that counterfeit church.

Last verse of the chapter: "And in her was found the

blood of the prophets, and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth." That used to puzzle me, just like it puzzled me in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew when Jerusalem was destroyed: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth from Abel the righteous, unto the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar." Now, that apostate church did not kill all the people of the Old Testament days, for it did not exist. Then, what is meant by saying that upon it shall come all the righteous blood? The idea is this: That the principle of persecution is the same, and that you may pursue that principle until you have identified yourself with every persecution that ever has been, you get in you the spirit of all past persecutions. It is the solidarity of sin.

Nineteenth chapter: "After these things I heard, as it were, a great voice of a great multitude in heaven." We have heard the earth voices, howling and complaining, now let us listen to heaven: "Hallelujah; salvation and glory and power belong to our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he has judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." Think about that, will you? To which song is your soul attuned? Will you weep with the wicked, or rejoice with the saints? In the book of the Psalms there is a division called the "Hallelujah Psalms," and on Passover occasions what is called the "Great Hallel" is sung; Jesus and His apostles sang it at the observance of the Lord's Supper. That is one of the most striking portions of the Psalms; it denotes the highest expression of joy and praise.

"And a second time they say, Hallelujah." Notice

right after that: "And her smoke goeth up for ever and for ever." Hallelujah up yonder, smoke down here; the burning of the counterfeit church and the glory of the saints in heaven over its disappearance as a persecuting agency.

Notice who participate in the Hallel: "And the four and twenty elders," those who represent the continuous priesthood of God's people on earth. "And the four living creatures," that is, the four Cherubim that constitute the chariot of God on His messages of mercy. "They fell down and worshipped God, saying, Hallelujah, amen." That is not all of it: "And a voice came forth from the throne, saying: Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great," not only the Cherubim and the elders, but let everybody rejoice. Now, let us see what response was made to that: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying: Hallelujah; for the Lord, our God, the Almighty, reigneth. Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let us give the glory unto him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready, and it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen bright and pure; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

Back in the twelfth chapter, we saw that radiant woman driven into the wilderness, the world despised her, Pagan power persecuted her, Papal power persecuted her. Here we have seen the purple woman go down in smoke. I told you that this whole section was a war between these two women. The radiant woman not only comes out of the wilderness, but arrays herself for marriage to the Lamb. There are two pertinent parables in Matthew: One, in the twenty-second chapter of Matthew, the para-

ble of the marriage of the King's Son, which relates to the time of the espousal; and one in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the wise and foolish virgins which relates to the consummation of the espousal: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

The church, conceived of as an institution, a time institution, now becomes the glory church, wedded to the Lamb in heaven. I have explained what the righteousnesses of the saints mean, in the chapter on the promises, and I will not discuss it now.

9th verse: "And he saith unto me: Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb." Blessed are they, I give you a general question: What are the beatitudes of the book of Revelation? Everything that commences with "Blessed" is a beatitude. Compare them with the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. I will call them off to you: The first beatitude is chapter i, 3, then xiv, 13, then xx, 6, then xxii, 7. You write out all of these, take each one of them into your heart, and you will see that our Lord did not get through speaking beatitudes when He delivered His sermon on the mount.

"And he said unto me [that is, the interpreting angel]: These are the true words of God; and I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he said unto me: See thou do it not; I am a fellow servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

What a glorious thing the fellowship of the different servants of God! We do not worship the church, we do not worship any one of these ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of shining angels of God; they are servants of God; you are a servant of God. "See thou do it not." They are working for

the same cause for which you are working. Their lot, for the present, is higher than yours, but don't forget that it is only for a little season, and then you will be higher than they. So do not worship any one that one day you will be above. The biggest preacher in the world ought to be glad to join in the fellowship of worship with the poorest ragged little street urchin that ever found peace in believing in Jesus Christ. They stand together on a plane of equality before an impartial God. And, brethren, it has been one of the joys of my life that I have not despised any one of the little ones that believe on Jesus Christ. I would not turn on my heel for the difference between the poor dying beggar that loved Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of John D. Rockefeller. They stand just exactly even, the rich and the poor, for in Christ Jesus there are no rich and no poor. We are all one, and we are all one with the angels in service.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. From what Old Testament prophecies is the imagery of this eighteenth chapter borrowed?
2. What is the chief sin of the counterfeit church, causing her downfall?
3. Are there true children of God among the Romanists?
4. How do they escape her doom?
5. Give historic instances of God's people leaving the counterfeit church.
6. Show from both Old Testament and New Testament analogues that God does not destroy the righteous with the wicked.
7. Cite Paul's pertinent exhortation to the Corinthians.
8. What is the meaning in verse 6 of "rendering double"?
9. Cite, without figures of speech, some of the merchandise of the counterfeit church.
10. Who will bewail the downfall of the counterfeit church? And who rejoice?
11. How do you account for the expression in the last verse of the chapter that "in her was found the blood of all that had been slain upon the earth," and what parallel expression in Matthew concerning Jerusalem?
12. What distinction do you make between the parable of

the marriage of the King's son in Matthew xxii, and the parable of the wise and foolish virgins in Matthew xxv, and on what Jewish custom are both founded?

13. Which of these parables is parallel with Revelation xix, 6-9?

14. What the beatitudes in Revelation?

15. Why is angelolatry a sin?

XVII

THE TRIUMPHANT HOLY WAR, INTRODUCING THE MILLENNIUM

Revelation XIX, 11—XX, 13

THIS is the last synchronous view in this book. The first one was from chapter vi, 1, to viii, 1, the gospel as preached to the end of time; the second one was from viii, 2, to xi, 19, the gospel as prayed to the end of time; the third one was from xii, 1, to xix, 10, the conflict between the true church and the counterfeit church. Now, we have the fourth and last synchronous view; that is to say, the triumphant Holy War that introduces the Millennium. I am going to put this study in the form of a catechism.

1. Who is the hero of this war? Ans.: Our Lord Himself, as the chief captain of our salvation. Your lesson says: "And I saw the heavens open, and behold! a white horse; and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." The other references to Him we will note later.

2. What are His titles? Ans.: With reference to His covenant-keeping with His people He is called faithful and true. Whatever He says to His people is true, and to whatever promise He makes He is faithful: Faithful and True is His name, that refers to His people. With reference to the Father, His name is "Logos," or the word of God (see verse 13 of your lesson). With reference

to the nations He is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (see verse 16 of your lesson). With reference to the angels He is Michael, the Prince. (See Revelation xii, 7.) Now these are His titles in four directions: with reference to His people; with reference to the Father; with reference to the nations; with reference to the angels.

3. In the exercise of what office is He here represented? Ans.: In His kingly office as a royal conqueror, judging and making war, on His head many crowns.

4. What the distinction between His appearance on the white horse here, and His appearance on the white horse in chapter vi, 2; both times there comes forth a white horse and rider? Ans.: There, on the white horse (chapter vi), His weapon was a bow, shooting arrows of conviction into individual hearts, as the gospel was preached, and that record says that a crown was given Him. But here, on His head are many crowns, and His weapon is a sword of judgment, smiting nations and governments, not individuals. There the bow was used for the salvation of the hearer of the gospel. Here the sword is to make all nations bow to His supremacy as Lord.

5. Who constitute His armies, and how are they described? Ans.: His armies are the saints, and they are described as clothed in fine linen, pure and white. I will ask you to recall that great war song, the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm: "The Lord saith unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool; the law shall go forth from Zion, and in the day that thou leadest forth thine armies, thy young men shall be volunteers, going forth in the beauties of holiness and as multitudinous as the drops of the dew at the dawn of the morning." How aptly that applies here. I do not mean to say that Christ, in His body, is present on earth in this war; He is conducting the campaign from

heaven, and His armies are to wage war here on this earth. I call your attention again to another pertinent Psalm: "The kings of the earth set themselves and take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed! Yet have I set my king upon my Holy Hill of Zion," and just exactly what He does here is ascribed to Him in that second Psalm. The fine linen, pure and white, as I have explained to you in the lecture on the promises, expresses the righteousnesses of the saints, which they receive in justification, regeneration and sanctification.

Now, here comes an important question: His people had a very active part in the overthrow of the counterfeit church, but

6. What part has His people in this war of judgment that we are now reading about? Ans.: They have no executive part. We notice they carry no weapons; they have no part except declarative, and to be witnesses of His might.

7. How does this appear? Ans.: From the Old Testament analogues and prototypes; for example: Israel bore no active part in the plagues of judgment sent upon Egypt; no part in the overthrow of Pharaoh's host at the Red Sea. They were witnesses and the Lord fought the battle. They had no part in the overthrow of Sennacherib as set forth in II Kings xix, 35. Now, in order that you may understand this war, and what part God's people have in it, I will read you a description by Byron:

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

"Like the leaves of the forest when the Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset was seen:

Like leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

"For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still.

"And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

"And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

"And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!"

We are now studying one of the most important lessons in the book, a day in which God Himself intervenes by extraordinary judgment. It appears also from the description of this very battle given in the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah; listen at this: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, Mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress *alone;* and of the peoples *there was no man with me;* yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath, and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, *and there was none to help.* And I wondered *that there was none to uphold;* therefore mine own

arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood upon the earth."

Now, this is an exact prophetic description of the hero in this war as set forth in this chapter; the references are to precisely the same event. We notice that He is just as much alone in the sending of the judgment in this terrible war as He was alone when He sent the angel of death to pass over the hosts of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria.

8. What, then, the supreme lesson of our passage? Ans.: God's government of the nations and judgments on them to enforce their acknowledgment of His supremacy.

9. How did He once enforce this lesson on Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar? I think I had better quote that for you; it is an old lesson that He is giving. I will quote from the fifth chapter of Daniel (Daniel is interpreting to Belshazzar the handwriting on the wall): "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the kingdom and greatness and glory and majesty; and because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, nations and languages trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him; and he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beast, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; *until he knew that the most high God*

ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will, and thou, Belshazzar, hast seen that lesson and hast not regarded it, and thou hast despised the God of heaven and of law. This handwriting comes out over thy wall: Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin. It means that thy kingdom is divided; it is measured to the Medes and Persians; thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."

Now, what He did in that case to Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar He is about to assert in this great battle of the nations.

10. Under whose leadership have human governments denied the supremacy of God? Ans.: Under the leadership of the devil, who usurped the kingdom of this world, and who shapes the policies of worldly governments and municipalities.

11. This next is a very important question. Since the preceding chapter disposes of the counterfeit church forever, why do the beast and the false prophet appear in this lesson? The beast is that upon which the counterfeit church rode, and it was the false prophet that made the people worship the image of the beast. Now, as the counterfeit church is disposed of before this event here, how is it that the beast and the false prophet appear here, and are taken and are cast into the lake of fire?

My answer is that, as was explained to you repeatedly, the beast is a politico-religious government, a union of church and state, and as such was not confined to Romanism; many Protestant kingdoms are just that way. Germany is that way now, Austria is that way now, England is that way now. There is a union of church and state, and that is the beast here. The woman in purple and scarlet is not riding him, but some other ecclesiasticism is riding him. Now, the one thing that goes down

in this war, that never re-appears again in human history, is the union of church and state, and the consequent persecution of the saints. That kind of government God does not favour, unless it is His own theocracy, with Him as the king, and He the sole judge of what is religion.

It is impossible for me to make you understand, in so brief a space, what a tremendous impediment to the progress of the kingdom of Jesus Christ has been the union of church and state. We had it even here in this country in Colonial times. Within a few miles of where the battle of Lexington was fought, and near the time of that battle, the sheriff came and sold the choice acres out of the garden, or the fields of the Baptists in that community, put it up at auction at forced sale, in order to obtain funds to build a church for another denomination, that had few members in that community. And even John Adams said to Isaac Backus, the great Baptist historian, when he went to him and asked him to urge Massachusetts to allow freedom of conscience: "You might as well expect to see the sun rise in the west and set in the east, as to expect Massachusetts to tolerate anything but state religion."

We had it in Virginia: Some of the most distinguished Baptists were imprisoned, their property confiscated, and Patrick Henry, when defending one of them, read the indictment: "Indicted for preaching the glorious gospel of the blessed God." The way he said that shook the union of church and state in Virginia.

Now, in this war, the war that we are now studying, that beast of the union of church and state is taken and cast into hell forever never to re-appear. In the same way the false prophet is taken, and false prophets are not limited to Papacy. The Archbishop of Canterbury may be a false prophet just as well as the Pope. When

he was over here some months ago, visiting the United States, a number of distinguished ladies and gentlemen called upon him and asked him when he got back home to let the people alone to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences; he gave slight heed to their petitions. The Greek church, in Russia and the Balkan States, is also a national religion. They fill the world with protest against the Turk for oppressing their religion, but show no toleration to people more evangelical than themselves. Now, that is why the beast and the false prophet appear here.

12. What the occasion of this gathering of the nations to battle with the Lamb, and distinguish between this conflict and the battle of Har-Magedon, which we have recently discussed? Ans.: In the battle of Har-Magedon the Romanist church, as an institution, was destroyed, many kings and governments assisting in her destruction; but the prelude of this war is the return of the Jews into the Holy Land from every nation where they have been dispersed, and the nations are just as jealous of their restoration to and possession of that land, as they were jealous of the Romanist supremacy, and they gather their armies together for the destruction of the Jews and the retaking of the Holy Land.

That man is blind who cannot see the march of modern events: the railroad that Germany is building into the Holy Land; the eye of England and every other nation is fixed upon that most strategic position in all the East, to wit: The eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Those thundering Bulgarian guns that are to-day shaking the foundations of Constantinople are but a step toward Jerusalem, and the time will come when God's many ancient prophecies will be fulfilled: He will gather His people out of all the nations whither they have been

dispersed; He will assemble them in their own land; and when assembled there, with their unprecedented wealth, holding the strategical position of the East, the nations will remember their enmity to the Jews. This is the only country in the world that has not persecuted the Jew, this United States. And there will be a gathering of the powers to destroy the Jew and recapture that land. The Jews are unable to withstand the armies of the nations, then comes the rider on the white horse. Then comes Jehovah where these nations are assembled in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and by divine interposition two things happen: The Jews are converted in one day, the whole nation is born in a day, and the judgment of God, just as it fell upon the hosts of Sennacherib, falls upon the gathered armies of the nations, and destroys them.

13. Why, in a previous chapter, were certain Old Testament and New Testament prophecies grouped with the Har-Magedon war, and here applied differently? I thought some of you understood me by this time; frequently I put in a catch question. I designedly mixed up the grouping of those passages to provoke independent investigation. You have only to turn back to chapter xiv for that mixed grouping of Har-Magedon. I wanted you to see for yourselves the difference on the issues between the conflict of the counterfeit church with the true church at Har-Magedon, and this great battle for the salvation of the Jews.

14. What passages, then, in both Testaments, are now grouped as belonging to the Holy War of this lesson? There is no catch in the question this time. I will give you the passages that bear upon your lesson: Isaiah lxiii, 1-6: "Who is this that cometh out of Edom with dyed garments?" etc. I will quote the other passage

from Isaiah, a continuation of the same subject all through the rest of the book of Isaiah. I quote from the sixty-sixth (the last) chapter of Isaiah, following that war (I preached on this at the Convention in Houston): "Whoever heard of such a thing; who hath ever seen such a thing: shall a land be born in one day? shall a nation be brought forth at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." That connects with this battle, in which the hero has the dyed garments sprinkled with blood.

Then, in Ezekiel, thirty-sixth chapter, from the 22d to the 25th verses, and the thirty-seventh chapter. Now, I will quote, substantially, the pertinent part: "Not for your sakes will I do this, but for my own name sake will I do it, which name you have profaned among nations where you have been dispersed; I will gather you out of all the nations where you have profaned my name, into your own land, and then I will sprinkle the water of purification upon you, and you shall be clean, from all your idols and all your filthiness will I cleanse you; and I will take away your stony heart and give you a heart of flesh, I will put my spirit within you, and then you will keep my commandments and do them."

The next chapter of Ezekiel shows a great valley full of dry bones, representing all the dispersed fragments of Israel, and the question is propounded: "Can these dry bones live?" And the prophet says: "Thou knowest"; and God says: "Prophesy over these dry bones." "What shall I prophesy?" "Prophesy this: Come, Oh Spirit, from the four ends of the earth, and breathe upon these slain," and the Spirit came, and they lived and stood up, a mighty army. And this, says the prophet, is the restoration of the whole house of Israel.

All of the third chapter of Joel refers to this war. He

says: "I will gather all the nations together against you, when I have assembled you in my own land. I will gather them in the valley of Jehoshaphat; multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. And I will say: Put in the sickle and reap the vintage; and fill up the winevat, and I will tread out the winevat until all my garments are stained with blood."

Then in the twelfth chapter of Zechariah it is said: "I will gather my people in the last day out of all the nations, and in that day I will pour out upon them the spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his firstborn son; it shall be a great mourning, every family apart. And in that day a fountain shall be opened for sin, and for uncleanness, in Jerusalem." And then in the fourteenth chapter he goes on to describe the battle of the nations gathered against the Jews restored and converted, and all at once the lights go out. "Never was there such a day," says the prophet. "The sun is darkened, the moon is darkened, but at even time there shall be light, and there shall be an earthquake such as the earth never felt before, and Mount Olivet shall split wide open, and half shall go to the west and half to the east," and then he goes on to describe the Millennium that follows.

And then, in the eleventh chapter of Romans, Paul says that the Jews did not stumble that they might fall forever. You Gentiles were saved by their fall. Their coming back will be as the life from the dead, and so all Israel shall be saved when they look to their Saviour.

15. Now comes this question: Why are the vintage of Revelation xiv, 19, and the war of Revelation xix classed with the prophecies promising the restoration of the Jews to their land, the war of the nations on them and the

conversion of the Jews in one day? Ans.: Because the prophet Joel predicts in express words that very vintage that we described in chapter xiv of this book. And the prophet Isaiah draws the very picture of this hero conquering with his garments stained with blood, and commences it with the battle against the nations and tells of the salvation of the Jews; and because Peter says, speaking to the Jews: "Repent ye, so that your sins may be blotted out, and so that refreshings may come from his presence, and so that he may send Jesus whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restitution of all things." That shows that Peter makes the repentance and conversion of the Jews a condition precedent to the final advent of our Lord and his restoration of all things. I told you that there never could be a Millennium until the Romanist church had passed away; and I now tell you that there never can be a Millennium until the Jews are converted, and it will be the quickest, widest entrance into the gate of salvation that this world has ever seen, a whole nation in a day. Three thousand on the day of Pentecost were converted; that was only the offering of the first sheaf, the firstfruits, and if three thousand be one sheaf, what will the harvest be? Therefore, I say that the Christian ought not to long for Pentecostal times; keep your back turned on Pentecost, and look to the harvest ten thousand times bigger than Pentecost that is ahead of you.

16. What is meant by the binding of Satan? God's power is exercised over this usurper that has held the earth six thousand years, or nearly all of that time, and He is determined that the earth shall have a Sabbath, a thousand-year Sabbath. As Satan has held it six thousand years, there shall be a thousand years of peace and salvation; the devil shall not cast a shadow over any

man's soul, nor press his cloven foot on any breaking heart, nor come with terrors to any dying man or woman, and shall not weave his spells of enchantment, and shall not beguile the nations, but he shall be chained and cast into the pit, and a rock placed over the mouth and sealed up for a thousand years. I will be glad when it comes. I want to tell you about the Millennium; I want you to understand; you will be able to understand a great many strange scriptures when you comprehend the Millennium.

What, then, is this war? It is a war of Jesus Christ against human governments, based on Satan's power. Governments coming to thwart the promises of God by the destruction of the Jewish nation, in which the beast government goes down forever, and the false prophet forever, and Satan is bound for a thousand years, and all the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. And it is not so very far off. The world was four thousand years old when Christ came, and it is nearly two thousand years since He came. The devil's time is nearly out; events are moving rapidly, ocean and air are navigated, telegraph wires long rusted with commercial and political lies shall shine with the transmission of messages of mercy and salvation.

The questions on this chapter are embodied in the text, as it was prepared in the form of a catechism.

XVIII

THE MILLENNIUM

Revelation XX, 4, 5, 6

THIS particular study contains just three verses, chapter xx, verses 4, 5 and 6. The theme is the Millennium, but before defining it let us consider its precursors, the things that precede it and bring it about.

The first one we have found to be the downfall of the Romanist counterfeit church, symbolized first by the woman in purple and scarlet and second by the mystic Babylon. We found that, instrumentally, the downfall of this Romanist church was brought about by two agencies: First, the governments of the earth "shall hate the harlot and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire" (Revelation xvii, 16). The second agency: The saints, by preaching, teaching and publishing the pure gospel, shall expose all of her heresies and idolatries (Revelation xii, 11), and by their prayers they shall bring on her the judgment of God (Revelation vi, 10, and viii, 3-5). That is the first precursor—the forerunner—of the Millennium.

The second precursor: "The days of the Gentiles being fulfilled" (see Luke xxii and xxiv), the Jews shall be gathered together out of all the nations where they have been dispersed, into their own land, and the nations shall gather together to make war on them, and then shall

come the Jewish harvest of which Pentecost is only the firstfruits; the whole nation to be converted in one day. This conversion of the Jews occurs in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, of the gospel, and is accomplished through their conviction, repentance, faith and regeneration, just exactly as our conversion was brought about, and if you have any doubt about it read carefully Ezekiel xxxvi, 22-27, and xxxvii, 1-14, and you will see that the Jews are to be regenerated; that is, their souls cleansed by the application of the blood of Christ, and their spirits renewed within them, just as yours are. And by reading Zechariah xii, 9, to xiii, 1, you will see that the Spirit was poured out on them—the spirit of grace and supplication. They have mourning, or godly sorrow, they have their repentance, their faith in the One they pierced, and the fountain of cleansing is opened to them for sin and uncleanness, just as in your case. And then, if you will read Romans xi, 15-31, you will see that the conversion of the Jews is brought about just like your own conversion. Let it be clear in your minds that when the Jews look upon Him whom they have pierced, they see Him not by sight in His final advent, but by faith on the cross as lifted up in preaching (see John iii, 14, 15; xii, 32; xix, 37). And being saved, they become the greatest of all missionaries.

What the Gentiles are doing for the spread of the gospel is nothing to what the Jews will do when they turn to the Lord. As Paul says, if their falling caused the Gentiles to be saved, their salvation will be as life from death. In the eleventh chapter of Romans he goes into ecstasy—sublime ecstasy—over the result of the conversion of the Jews.

Now, in the conversion of the Jews, we see no coming of the Messiah. On the contrary, Peter, in preaching

to the Jews (Acts, third chapter), says to them: "Repent and turn away [first] so that your sins may be blotted out; [second] so that refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; [third] so that he may send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restoration of all things." In other words, the salvation of the Jews must take place before Christ can come—that is one of the antecedent things—and as the salvation of the Jews was the last thing He discussed, bringing us up to the Millennium, I am sure that we had not come to any final advent of our Lord.

Following their conversion, we saw that Jehovah smote the nations that had gathered to destroy them, and in His judgment on the nations the beast and the false prophet perished, and all governments contrary to God perished —swept away from the face of the earth. I do not very well see how the Millennium could come with human governments constituted and run as they now are—I mean municipal governments like Fort Worth, New York City, New Orleans, San Antonio, Galveston, Houston, state governments, national governments—I do not see how it could come under such governments. Then there is a persecuting union of church and state in nearly all the governments of the world at the present time. Now, all these opposing elements to the Kingdom of God must be broken down before the Millennium can come; so that the kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of God (Revelation xi, 15), and as Daniel puts it: "The stone that Nebuchadnezzar saw come out of the mountain without hands" (and that was the fifth great world-empire) "and that stone [says Daniel] became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." Now, in this great war, in the conquest of the world from Satan, you are not to understand that our Lord on the white horse, the hero

of the war, has come in His final advent, personally, visibly, palpably, tangibly, audibly. You may just as well say that when He first appeared on the white horse in the sixth chapter of Revelation that that was His final advent. He is reigning in heaven, but His armies are fighting on the earth, as the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm explains to you.

We saw, as the last precursor of the Millennium, the chaining and shutting up of Satan. You understand that this is a book of symbols. What is the symbolic meaning of the chaining of Satan? I do not suppose that a literal angel will put a literal chain on Satan, who is a spirit. But he is chained when all of his agencies are swept away. The church, and the faithful ministers in the preaching of this book, are to illuminate the world, and when the churches are faithful and multiply and fill the earth, and when the ministers preach only the true gospel, until, as Isaiah says, "the whole earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord," the very prevalence of light dispels the darkness. So we have something to do in the chaining of Satan. As Paul says in the sixteenth chapter of Romans, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," according to the first promise in Genesis iii, 15, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. His people must triumph over Satan; "they must [says Paul] put on the whole armour of God, that they may resist and overcome the devil"—the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God—and thus they bruise Satan under their feet. Or, as Peter puts it in his first letter (fifth chapter, 8th to 10th verse): "Be sober, be vigilant, your adversary the devil

goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith." I repeat that Christ's victory over Satan is empty unless we share it. The earth was made for man, the dominion was given to man (Genesis i, 26-28), but Satan, through man's sin, usurped the sovereignty of the world and made it his kingdom, and now it must be rescued from him. "The saints [says Daniel] must possess the kingdom." The fulness of the Gentiles and the conversion of the Jews accomplish this object.

Keeping in mind these precursors to the Millennium, we will now consider the Millennium itself.

What, then, is the Millennium? It is a Latin word which means a period of a thousand years, employed first to delimit the period of time that Satan is chained and sealed up so that he cannot come out to deceive the nations. That is, the saints shall possess the earth just as long as Satan is bound and shut up. It is a victory of the Spirit dispensation through the churches, the ministers and the gospel. It means that Satan has usurped the kingdom of the world for six millenniums, and that the earth shall have in time, and through the gospel, her Sabbath Millennium—that is, the seventh one—her thousand years of peace and rest and joy and gospel triumph, with no devil to tempt, seduce, beguile. He has been the author of every evil human government, whether municipal, state or national. He is the author of every evil religion, all idolatries, all lying, all prostitution, all necromancy and witchcraft, all evil philosophies, all evil theories of life, all immoralities of conduct and life. From him have come strifes, wars, famines, pestilences, slavery of bodies and souls, disease and death. From him all the monopolies and grinding of the poor for selfish greed. Now, imag-

ine, if you can, what will be the increased population of the world in a thousand years under such conditions—no wars to kill off the people and eat up their substance; no pestilences like cholera, smallpox, the bubonic plague, no grinding poverty, and the churches all shining, and the preachers all shining, not a false note in their preaching; the whole earth subdued, the obstacles of nature overcome, every part of the earth brought under the dominion of man until one may live as comfortably at the North Pole as in the temperate zone or the tropics, with the air subdued so one may navigate it as safely as the seas below it—of course I mean by human inventions.

Under such conditions, with every latent force of nature developed and paying tribute, Texas alone could support a population of 250 millions easily. All the earth swept with revival power from continent to continent, many fold more people would be converted in that thousand years than ever lived on the earth in the preceding six thousand years. Indeed, so great will be the majority of the saved over the lost, when you come to make up the totals, that the relative proportion of the lost will be about as those now in the jails and penitentiaries when compared to the outside population. Do not ever deceive yourself with the fear that the devil will get the majority of the human race. And all of this world-illumination will be through the Holy Spirit, through the churches, the ministers, and the gospel, while Jesus reigns in heaven, and before His final advent. If you ever supposed that the Holy Spirit, Christ's vicar on earth, would fail, then give up that supposition. If you ever entertained the notion that the gates of hell would prevail against the church which Jesus Christ established, give that up. If you ever supposed that a true ministry would altogether perish, and a pure gospel cease in the

land, then give that up. This book of Revelation was given to teach one great truth—as shown in the first revelation in the book—that the whole world is to be lighted by the candlesticks and the stars, and Christ in walking among the candlesticks does not walk among them in person, but every time He speaks He says: "Hear ye what the Spirit says unto the churches." It is a ministration of the Spirit that accomplishes all these things. There will be a final, personal, glorious advent of our Lord—only let us wait until we get to it. We will come to it very soon now, but we must not look for it in connection with the Millennium. There are just three verses on the Millennium in the whole Bible, and not one of those three verses says a solitary word about the advent of Christ or about the resurrection of the body—not a syllable. If you think so, let us test you on it as we take it up.

Twentieth chapter, 4th verse, first clause. We want to find out about the living Christians, and that first clause gives it to us: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." Who sat upon thrones? What is the antecedent of that pronoun "they"? If you will look back to the nineteenth chapter, you will find who it is. It is that crowd of saints, in fine linen pure and white, who followed the Lord in His great campaign. What is the meaning of "they sat on these thrones"? It means that the good people are on top in every kind of government during the Millennium—they are the mayors, the police, the sheriffs, the judges: they are the presidents, and if there are any kings, they are the kings. The rule has passed into the hands of the saints. The testimony of the prophets on that subject is express. I do not know anything more sublime, or more beautiful, than the testimony

of the prophets to the sway in public matters of the saints in that time. I quote just two or three of these in order to show you what conditions prevail. The eleventh chapter of Isaiah has one of the finest passages in the Bible on the Millennium. The whole chapter is devoted to our Lord: 6th verse: "And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the goat; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the oxen. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea."

Following the conversion of the Jews in one day in the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah this language is used (18th verse): "But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create, for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruits of them, not build for somebody else to inhabit, or plant for somebody else to eat, for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth to calamity, for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah." Then no-

tice the 24th verse: "And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." And he closes the book with: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith Jehovah, and they shall go forth and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me"—they shall contemplate the passing away of the destroying things.

Now you see that in this earth condition—an earth condition under a very favourable environment—life is prolonged. He takes away the diseases that come from the devil and that result through evil government, and the infant shall live to be a hundred years old, when no man shall cease to fill out his days; the sanitary conditions during the Millennium will be such as this world has never before witnessed. They marry, they give in marriage; they do die—through that thousand years, the people are not immortal—but the conditions of life are very widely different. And the main thing is that the saints are on top—they are filling the offices; the earth is under their jurisdiction.

Now read the other half of that verse, and see the condition of the dead during the Millennium. That is the next thing we want to find out. "And I saw the souls"—mark you, not the bodies, as some people would have it—"of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God [that is, the martyrs], and such as worshipped not the beast, neither the image of the beast, and received not the mark upon their foreheads nor upon their hands"—that is, I saw the souls of the righteous dead, and "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Where is Christ? He is in heaven reigning, and these souls of the righteous

dead live with Him and reign with Him. That has been promised all through the book.

We find out about the wicked dead directly, but just now we are on the righteous dead. What is their condition during the Millennium days? Their state is called the first resurrection: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

Why is that changed condition of the righteous dead called a resurrection? Let me make one thing very plain to you: the word "resurrection" is not limited to the body. In the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, the conversion of the Jews, their regeneration, is set forth in the imagery of a physical resurrection, and yet it is a conversion that is discussed. But the symbolism is as if the bones of the dead were coming together, but the meaning of it is, as expressly given, the salvation of the Jews, as we have just discussed.

Now, in the letter to the Ephesians, and in the first chapter, Paul uses the same symbolism. He says: "Every conversion is brought about by the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead; you hath he quickened,"—to quicken means to make alive, and yet that making alive does not refer to the body; it refers to our conversion. In John v, 25-29, our Lord speaks of two resurrections, one spiritual, meaning regeneration, and one physical, referring to the body. Spurgeon has a great sermon on the spiritual resurrection. Indeed, so common was the idea of counting regeneration a resurrection that certain heretics at Corinth and Ephesus maintained that it was the only resurrection, denying altogether the resurrection of the body (see I Corinthians xv, 12; II Timothy, ii, 18).

I am simply proving to you from these examples that there may be a resurrection that is spiritual, and not

physical. But what is here called the "first resurrection" is not regeneration. While spiritual, it is another kind. Now, it is my business and duty to show you the meaning of the first resurrection in this passage—whatever it means, it has no reference to the body—and I know exactly how to do it. The correct interpretation of two passages in this book will clarify the whole matter. Both refer to the souls of the saints; the second presents such a happy change from the condition of the first it may well be called a resurrection. The first passage is Revelation vi, 9, "And when he opened the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held, and they cried with a great voice, saying: How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little time, and their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course."

My contention is that in this state of the righteous dead they are, in a figurative sense, not living. That is, (1) their martyrdom seems to be a failure. Their lives go out in darkness, and the enemy triumphs over the tragedy. (2) Their works do not follow them. It is not apparent and demonstrable that they have won a victory, because they are not avenged. God's justice seems to be sleeping. The victorious malice of their enemies seems to be accepted by the world as the will of God. They pass into history as convicted and executed felons.

Now consider the next passage (xiv, 8-13). Here the mystic Babylon, the Romanist counterfeit church, which put them to death, is judged. She drinks the cup of

God's undiluted wrath; the martyrs are avenged and vindicated. The reproach is lifted from the tragic ending of their lives. They become the heroes instead of the felons of history. Hence the 13th verse: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them." That is, when God has avenged them and their enemies are fallen, there is a great change in public opinion, in the historic judgment, as to their place in the house of fame. To die in the Lord now is not to pass under a cloud—it is a triumphant ascension into glory and light. The change is so great it is called a resurrection. "They live and reign with Christ a thousand years." The principles for which they died are now triumphant. Judgment upon those who put them to death is to them as life from the dead; it is represented as a resurrection, and this is the only place in the Bible where the term "first resurrection" is used, and it is expressly declared to be a resurrection of souls and not of the body. The principles that they advocated are triumphant—they have swept over the world.

"The rest of the dead"—the rest of the dead means the wicked dead. They do not so live in that time. They are under no such favourable conditions; their works do not follow them in the Millennium. Their day is now. The wicked man is yet on top; it looks like he has accomplished his purposes, the righteous are trampled under foot; the methods of the wicked seem to be wise now because they prevail. But not so in the Millennium. The Millennium time must pass away before the rest of the dead shall be alive. If, then, "the first resurrection" is this triumphant vindication of God, what is "the second resurrection"? It must be in kind like

the first. It comes at the end of the Millennium, when the thousand years are finished and Satan is loosed. The wicked dead now live and reign with Satan. During his "little season" of triumph, they appear to come from under the cloud of adverse judgment. It is a common figure of speech. We speak of the dark ages of ignorance, and the subsequent revival of letters, arts and the sciences. This revival is called "Renaissance" or new birth, or revival of anything which has long been in decay or desuetude. So in Millennium times the souls of the righteous have their Renaissance, but when Satan is loosed again the wicked dead have their Renaissance.

Evidently, then, the second resurrection is when the rest of the dead live—referring to their souls and not their bodies, and it is distinctly stated that they will live just as soon as this thousand years end, and they do live just as soon as Satan is loosed and goes forth to deceive the nations again. Now, you see there are two resurrections—both of them of souls—one a resurrection of the souls of the righteous dead, and the other of the souls of the wicked.

Alford, in his commentary, refers to the passage "This is the first resurrection," and classifies it with the resurrection of bodies in xx, 12, 13, and adds in a triumphant way, that we cannot by any sound rules of interpretation make the first spiritual and the second physical. His error is in classification. The resurrection in xx, 12, 13, is not the correspondent to the "first resurrection" in xx, 6. The correspondent to the first resurrection must come immediately after the thousand years are finished, when Satan is loosed. That, like the first, will be a spiritual resurrection. The resurrection of bodies in xx, 12, 13, comes not when Satan is loosed, but after his last war campaign is ended. His logic would be good if

he did not make a mix-up in his premises. I am willing to risk whatever reputation I have on the soundness of my interpretation of this difficult passage. I say to Mr. Alford that neither the first nor the second resurrection is of the body—they are both of souls. There is not a word in these three verses about the Millennium that tells about the coming of Christ, or about the bodily resurrection of anybody.

Commencing at least in the latter part of the second century, and particularly in the third century, there were a number of people called Chiliasts—that means the same in Greek that Millennialist means in Latin—thousand-year people. These Chiliasts taught that the first resurrection here was a physical resurrection, and that Christ came to bring about the Millennium in His final advent, and that the Millennium was to be Christ's kingdom on earth, with Christ personally and visibly reigning over the Jews in Jerusalem, and through the Jews ruling the entire Gentile world. Christ rejected that view in His lifetime. The Jews would have made Him king at that time joyfully, and so triumphed over the Romans and the rest of the world. He refused that view: "My kingdom is not of this world."

It would be a tremendous anticlimax, if the view of the Kingdom that Christ rejected in His lifetime as unworthy, be accepted as the culmination, renewing all the old temple worship and the old types of ceremonies that were nailed to the cross of Christ and taken out of the way. On account of this teaching of the Chiliasts in the latter part of the second century and in the third century, a great many people began to reject the book of Revelation. And even now, if you accept that view, people will reject the book. Some of the best men living in the third and fourth centuries rejected the book because

of the view the Chiliasts had put upon the Millennium.

And what was their view? Their view was that Christ had no kingdom at all on the earth until the Millennium came, and then He would come and set up His kingdom here upon this earth. They virtually taught that the Spirit dispensation would fail—the churches would fail—the gospel would fail—and the world would get worse and worse, until there would be just a handful living when Christ came, and that He would by His coming in the Millennium convert the most of the people that are to be converted in this world, and by a different instrumentality.

Now, you may rest assured that whenever He does come the vicarship of the Holy Spirit ceases; you may rest assured that when He does come the administration of the churches ceases; you may rest assured that when He does leave heaven, intercession ceases. Whenever the High Priest comes out of the Holy of Holies, never to return again, there can be no more intercession for man. In other words, not a man, woman or child can be converted after Christ's return. The only people ever saved will be converted during the dispensation of the Spirit, the administration of the churches and the preaching of the glorious gospel—and these instrumentalities of salvation will never be changed. The plan of salvation is one plan and not two or three plans—not a few people saved through the churches and the Holy Spirit, and then a great body of people saved through some other instrumentality after Christ comes. When we come to the final advent, I will submit to your judgment the scriptures that support my view as to why He comes, when He comes, what He is to do when He comes—but we have not come to that yet. We know that He has

not come yet because the Man of Sin, that Paul speaks about, is to be destroyed by His advent. We have not come to that Man of Sin yet, but we will get to him in the next chapter.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What the precursors to the Millennium?
2. What the meaning of the word?
3. How much space does the Bible give to the Millennium?
4. Is this small account in literal or symbolic language?
5. In interpreting these three verses of symbolism, should they dominate the general trend of a plain literal teaching concerning our Lord's advent, or should the trend of literal teaching interpret them?
6. What the meaning of the first clause of xx, 4, particularly the "they"?
7. Cite three passages from Isaiah bearing on this time.
8. Is this result brought about in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, while our Lord is yet in heaven, and through the churches, ministry and gospel?
9. Will the saints in millennial times be marrying and producing children?
10. Will these children be subject to inherited depravity, and needing regeneration?
11. What the advantages to children born in millennial times?
12. What distinction is drawn between righteous dead and the wicked dead during the millennial period?
13. Is there any reference in these three verses to Christ's final advent, or to a resurrection of bodies?
14. If "the first resurrection" denotes a change in the status of the souls of the righteous dead, show from this book what the change is.
15. Illustrate from history how this change may be called a revival or resurrection.
16. When, according to these three verses, comes the "second resurrection," or the revival of the souls of the wicked, and what does that mean?
17. What capital mistake does Alford make in interpreting this passage?
18. According to this book of Revelation, does the ministry of the Holy Spirit fail, the churches fail, the gospel fail, and the world get worse and worse till Christ's final advent?
19. How, probably, will the Millennium affect the world population and the relative number of the saved and lost?

XIX

THE LOOSING OF SATAN FOR A LITTLE SEASON AND HIS FINAL DESTRUCTION

Revelation XX, 7-10

THE text we are to study is as follows: "And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war: the number of whom is as the sands of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet, and they shall be tormented day and night forever."

First, what is the loosening of Satan? We have seen the part in the binding of Satan borne by the saints, which suggests something of the meaning of the loosening of Satan. We are not denying the overruling divine power in the binding or loosening, but God works through agencies. If the churches and the ministers by their evangelical preaching be the agencies to restrict and shut up Satan, it is certain that carelessness, deterioration in piety, abating of revival power, will tend to loose him again. Toward the end of the thousand years the Chris-

tians may become slack in their exercise of power, may take things for granted, the workers and the evangelists grow cold, which gives Satan his long sought opportunity to renew the war.

Second, after the thousand years of supremacy, the earth full of the knowledge of the Lord, how does Satan find material on which to work? This question would not need to be answered if everybody understood just what the Millennium is. It is not a period of absolute sinlessness, there is no cessation of the power of inherited depravity in the Millennium period; all people are not converted, but the Christian spirit is dominant, they are on the throne. Moreover, generation is not regeneration, nor is piety hereditary. If every adult in the world were converted at one time, their children would not thereby be regenerated, and so in twenty or thirty years, half the population of the world would not be converted. Yet again, while the saints had the power and influence, evil would not dare to lift its head, yet it might hold itself in readiness for revolt. It is the outside rows of corn, next to the woods, that are squirrel-eaten. Our lesson tells us that it is in four distant corners of the world that Satan begins his work after he is loosed. The advantage of the Millennium consists largely in freedom from external solicitation to evil, temptation from Satan. In the last chapter I called your attention to what he had done from the outside to seduce unto evil, that is removed. The unrenewed nature of the unconverted is there, every child born during the Millennium is born in sin. A man being a Christian does not make his children children of grace, but the environment will increase the probabilities of conversion. Suppose, for instance, every civil officer in Fort Worth a Christian, and every officer's duties performed with a view to the glory of God, and

there were no saloons, no gambling houses, no houses of ill-fame, it certainly would be a much more favourable condition in which to lead souls to Christ than it is now.

Third, what the historical meaning of Gog and Magog? We find in Genesis, tenth chapter, that Magog was a descendant of Japhet, and from Ezekiel that Gog of the land of Magog settled in Central Asia, and his people lived around the Caspian Sea. They became known to history as Scythians, Tartars or Parthians, the most turbulent of all the nations. In the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel, it is predicted at length that, after the conversion of the Jews described in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters, Gog, from the land of Magog, will lead a countless host against Jerusalem, the Christian camp. Two whole chapters are devoted to it, and that he shall be overthrown by the power of God. It is this Ezekiel prophecy which furnishes the symbolism of our lesson.

In their inaccessible territory, the people of the land of Magog would be the last to come under the influence of the millennial power, and they would be the first to revolt against that power. Europe and America would most feel the millennial power; certain interior Oriental nations, most remote from travel, traffic and from the power of civilization and the centres of Christian influence, if we adhere to the strict terms here, will furnish Satan with the material for his last revolt. There has always been hanging over Europe and its civilization a yellow peril. Tamerlane once came very near destroying European civilization. He captured the Sultan of Turkey, who sought to withstand him, and asked him: "What would you have done with me if you had captured me?" The Sultan said: "I would have put you

in a cage and exhibited you alive." "Then that is what I will do with you," said Tamerlane. But as Ezekiel and Revelation prophetically refer to the same event, using symbolic language, it may well be that both use the terms "Gog and Magog" to image the character of the last human opponents to the Kingdom of God without intent to fix geographical boundaries. The real Babylon of ancient history was on the Euphrates, but the mystic Babylon was on the Tiber. So historically "Gog and Magog" were in Central Asia, but the mystical Gog and Magog come from some other locality.

Fourth: What takes place among the dead at the loosening of Satan? Ans.: As when the Christian was supreme, and all persecutions were avenged, the righteous dead were, in a figure, said to be made alive, and to live and reign with Christ during that thousand years, and as this revival is called a resurrection, so when Satan returns to power the rest of the dead, that is, the wicked dead, in the same figurative sense, shall live and reign with Satan until his final overthrow, and this is the second spiritual resurrection of the lesson, and this will follow immediately after the close of the thousand years; the rest of the dead shall not live until the thousand years are over.

Fifth: What, probably, the last device of Satan for the conquest of the world? Ans.: He has tried heathen persecution; he has tried persecution by a counterfeit church; he has tried to destroy national Israel ever since to them were given the covenants and promises, but God has preserved them throughout history, and He has now converted them and merged them into a spiritual Israel. Satan has tried to palm off on the people, the Jewish people, false Christs in the place of the true Christ who was born at Bethlehem. Our Saviour, in His great

prophecy recorded in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, tells about these false Christs. Now, there remains only one more possible impostor. He will admit that Jesus was the historical Messiah and that He ascended into heaven, but he will find a person, incarnate himself in that person, and claim that this person is the long-expected Messiah, who ascended unto heaven and promised to return, and for whose final advent the whole world is looking. He will accredit this impostor with many lying signs and wonders, and in the name of the returning Messiah he will make his last effort to destroy the people of the Messiah. Our Lord Himself foretold that many false Christs would appear to divert attention from His first coming in the flesh, but it is Paul who clearly foretold this last impostor claiming to be the returning Messiah in his last advent. Read what Paul says, from II Thessalonians, chapter ii: "Now, we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled either by spirit or by word, or by epistle as from us [purporting to come from us] as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise; for it will not be except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work; only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the

lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming [this man of sin will be alive and on the field when Jesus comes], even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all powers of signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit and unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

It is impossible to locate that man of sin in any period that does not touch the last coming of Christ; nobody else in history fills that picture. There may have been many antichrists, but this man of sin is the last; he will be on the field with false miracles and delusions when our Lord Himself returns and destroys him. You are to understand that in the millennial atmosphere no other impostor could have a following; he could not go among those Oriental nations and try to revive Confucianism or Mohammedanism, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord. He could not put on them any imposition that does not seem to be what they are looking for. He comes in the church "and sitteth in the temple of God," which is the church; he claims to be God, and seeks to be worshipped as God Himself. That is an incarnation of the devil, claiming to be God, not only God the incarnate, as Christ was at His first advent, but God in glory in His second advent. It is only among professing Christians, professing, but not possessing, that he can do this work. The whole world at this time professes Christianity; the whole world is waiting and praying and expecting the return of the Lord, and it is upon that

expectation that he relies for the acceptance of his imposture. The readiness of the Oriental mind to accept such imposture is immortalized in Tom Moore's "Veiled Prophet of the Korassan," and illustrated in the various Mahdis which appear as the one defeated by Kitchener at Kartoum when he went to avenge the death of Gordon.

Satan's defeat is final; his impostor is slain even while he is working his false miracles, every kind of lying sign and wonder; suddenly a great cry is heard: "Behold the bridegroom! Go ye out to meet him," and the real returning Lord appears on the scene, and that impostor shrivels up like a piece of parchment exposed to a seven times heated furnace.

One more humiliation awaits Satan, however, which will be considered in the next chapter. I will close this chapter with the promised discussion on the historical antichrists.

In the second chapter of John's first letter, he says: "Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? that is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son." In the fourth chapter, verses 2 and 3, he adds: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh, and now it is in the world already." Those two passages from John show you the general meaning of the word "antichrist." An "anti-local-optionist" is one who opposes local option, and in this book we have found that seven great world-empires have had the antichrist spirit. Moses accepted the reproach of Christ, but Jannes and Jambres,

the magicians of Pharaoh, withstood him. Egypt was the first world-power to oppose teaching concerning the coming Messiah, who was to bruise the serpent's head. Following Egypt came Assyria, through whose kings the ten tribes were led into bondage and much harm done to Judah. The next was Babylon, whose king destroyed Jerusalem and led her people into captivity. Next to Babylon came Persia, and it was while Xerxes the Great, the husband of Esther, was ruling, that an effort was made under the leadership of Haman to entirely destroy the Jewish people, but it was defeated by the providence of God and the instrumentality of Mordecai and Esther herself. After the Persians came the Greek power. And while Alexander himself was very kind in his dealings with the Jews, after his death came the division of his empire into four separate states. Two of these separate governments, the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids in Antioch, continually fought over the Holy Land lying between them, and one of them particularly, Antiochus Epiphanes, sought to blot out the religion of the Jews. Then came the Pagan Roman Empire, the Cæsars were its antichrist heads, and some of the Cæsars throughout Christian history are particularly called antichrists: Nero was one of them. He is the man who, after he had burned Rome, charged the arson upon the Christians, and had a long avenue fitted up on each side with stakes, and to each stake a Christian was tied and inflammable material poured over him and then set on fire. And Nero, in his chariot, drove down that path of fire, lighted by burning Christians. Hence all the early fathers referred to Nero as the antichrist. But Domitian, a younger brother of Titus, the son of Vespasian, was a worse persecutor than Nero; that is, his persecution was more widely spread, and a later emperor, Decius, led

the conflict which drove the church into the wilderness. His persecution was the worst of all.

Now, it was the custom among the Christians where the antichrist spirit embodied itself in a person to refer to him as the antichrist. So when the Roman power passed away, and out of the disintegrated elements of that heathen empire was constructed what is called the Holy Roman Empire, that Holy Roman Empire had a head which in this book is called the earth-beast, which looked like a lamb, but had the mouth of a dragon, and we have identified him as the Papacy, and so the Papacy, like the Cæsars, becomes an antichrist worse than all others. As some Cæsars were worse than others, so some Popes were worse than others, but the Papacy as a succession of Popes became the embodiment of antichrist to Christian people, whom they persecuted. Ask the dying Waldenses, or Albigenses, or ask Huss while he was burning, or Jerome of Prague, who is the antichrist, and they say: "The Pope of Rome is the antichrist." Daniel foretells three antichrists: 1. The "little horn" (Daniel viii, 9), which all interpreters of note recognize as Antiochus Epiphanes. 2. The Pagan Roman Empire (Daniel vii, 7), passing into the Holy Roman Empire. 3. The "little horn" which is the Papacy (Daniel vii, 8; vii, 19-27).

But our lesson in this chapter gives the last antichrist, Paul's man of sin, the most stupendous impostor that Satan ever sought to palm off on the gullible nations. He is a person; Satan takes possession of him just as demons took possession of people in the days of Christ; Satan speaks through him; Satan gives him the power to work lying signs and wonders. In effect he says: "O thou Christian world, looking for your Messiah to return, I am the Messiah returning." Now, in the eighth chapter of Daniel, in describing the conflict between the

Grecian and Persian power, he sees a ram with two horns (that is Medo-Persia), and he sees a goat with one horn come up (that is the Grecian Empire, Alexander the Great), that one horn breaking off and the four horns coming up, the division of his power into four governments. And he says there came up a little horn on that goat, and a great part of the book of Daniel is devoted to the discussion of that little horn on the goat. That was Antiochus Epiphanes, one of the vilest men that ever lived. He enacted it as a decree that no offering should be presented to the God of the Jews. He himself had a hog, which the Jews despise, brought in and sacrificed on the brazen altar. He demanded that all the Old Testament Scriptures be surrendered and burnt publicly; he put anybody to death that circumcised a child; he established heathen altars in the very centre of Jerusalem. If you ask the Jew who was the antichrist, he will say: "Antiochus Epiphanes." And if you want to read the most thrilling account of him that I know anything about, read the book of Maccabees on Antiochus Epiphanes. You will find an account in Josephus, but it is more thrilling in the book of Maccabees.

The seventh chapter of Daniel, after describing the four world-empires, Rome, the last which divided into the ten kingdoms, and was reconstructed into an empire with one religion but ten political heads, from the reconstruction came a "little horn," the Papacy, which absorbed three of the other horns, and it spoke great swelling words of blasphemy, and made war against the saints. We have identified in this discussion that antichrist with the Papacy, that is the little horn that overthrew three of the kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided, Papal states, of which he was the political head, as well as the ecclesiastical head, and held

the power over them until the days of Victor Emmanuel; we have seen him as the antichrist. I give you this general discussion of antichrists in order that you may see that the term expresses either the principle of opposition to the Messiah, or its embodiment in a person or succession of persons, as the Cæsars or the Popes.

"Who is *the* liar," says John,—the "boss liar,"—"but he that denieth that God was manifest in the flesh?"—he is the antichrist, and he says there are many antichrists. I repeat, then, that antichrist may represent a principle, and it may be embodied in a person as it was embodied in Antiochus Epiphanes and in Nero and in Domitian and Decius, in the Papacy, and last and most important, in this Man of Sin. I want to say to the reader that I was thirty years in disposing of Paul's Man of Sin. All the Protestant Commentaries say that the Pope is the Man of Sin, but I have already shown you that the Romanist counterfeit church passes away before the coming of Christ, and that the beast,—the politico-religious government, the union of church and state,—passes away, and that the false prophet passes away. But Paul's Man of Sin is the most blasphemous of all the incarnations of evil that ever took place on the earth. And the part that bothered me is that he is living and holding the fort following the Millennium. He is coming, with lying wonders and signs, and with unabashed front sits in the temple (that is, in the churches), claiming to be God, up to the very time that the cry is heard: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." You cannot put him anywhere else but after the Millennium period, nor can you conceive of any other kind of impostor, filled by Satan, that would fit into the period. I once said that the devil had very few original ideas, but he has many suits of clothes for each idea. He is a past master on

reproducing an idea in a different costume and fooling you with a change of clothes. Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad" tells of an American traveller in Europe going into an inn and calling for a special brand of very rare wine, of which only a few thousand bottles are made each crop. When they brought the wine, the traveller protested that it was not the kind ordered, as evident from the label and taste. The head waiter looked at it and said, "I see, it has the wrong label." And he reached into a drawer and got another label which he put on it and then handed it to them as the right kind. It was a mere change of label. There had been no change in the wine. So the devil is a past master in labels and costumes, but scant in original ideas. The idea is the same, the principle the same, whether Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome, or Papal Rome; whether the Pharaohs, the Seleucids or the Popes are the leaders.

Now, so far as the wars coming from the devil are concerned, we are done with them in this book. We have his Man of Sin on the scene, in the arena, telling his lies, working his miracles, who is to be stricken down by the second coming of Christ.

The examination questions on this chapter are embodied in the text itself, as it was prepared in the form of a catechism.

XX

THE SECOND ADVENT OF OUR LORD; THE GENERAL RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD; AND THE GENERAL AND FINAL JUDGMENT

Revelation XX, 11-15

THE passages we will study are as follows: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any man was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake."

I will reserve the seriatim and verbatim explanation of this passage, sentence by sentence, for the next chapter. The object of the present study is to lead up to it in a way that you will never again misunderstand, for the theme of this lesson is: "The second advent of our Lord, the general resurrection of the dead, and the gen-

eral and final judgment." I will put this chapter before you in a catechetical form:

1. Why was the first advent necessary? First, to set up a visible kingdom here upon the earth, which would absorb all other kingdoms, and to appoint the executive bodies, the churches, in that kingdom, with ministers and ordinances. Second, to make expiation for the sin of the world, to come as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Third, to destroy the works of the devil. Now, those are the three great reasons of His first advent; you could put in a number of others, but I ask you to notice particularly the object to set up here on this earth a visible kingdom.

2. What the sign of that first advent? The angels who announced to the shepherds that a Prince and Saviour was born unto Israel, said to them: "This shall be a sign to you, you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." He prepared that lowly sign for His first coming because He stooped to come, emptied Himself of His glory, and took upon Him the form of a servant. The sign of His first advent was to be a baby in a horse trough.

3. When that first advent, and was the date of it fixed? Paul says, in Galatians iv, 4, that in the fulness of time God sent forth His own Son, made of a woman. The time had to be ripe. That was four thousand years since the devil usurped the kingdom of this world by the fall of man, and how many people wore out their eyes watching for that coming! Eve thought when Cain was born that the promise was fulfilled. She said: "I have gotten the man from Jehovah"—i.e., the promised seed. And every mother in Israel had the hope that she would be the one through whom the promise would be fulfilled; and as the ages passed away in waiting, prophe-

cies became clearer, more definite, until, the world being prepared, Christ came.

4. How long did He remain? About thirty-three years.

5. What office did He complete in that time? The office of sacrifice. His offices are Prophet, Sacrifice, Priest, King and Judge. But while He was on earth the first time, He absolutely and forever fulfilled and completed the office of sacrifice, as we will learn in the ninth and tenth chapters of Hebrews, that He made one offering for sin, once for all, never to be repeated. That office work was finished.

6. What office work was partly completed? The office of prophet. As prophet He is the teacher, the revelator, and a great part of His teaching is revelation given in His lifetime.

7. What part of His high-priest office was completed between His death and His resurrection? Just as soon as His body died His spirit went to the Father: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." According to the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus on the great day of atonement, it was necessary for the high priest to take the sacrificial blood, while it was fresh and hot and smoking, and carry it into the most holy place, and offer it at the mercy-seat, and on the basis of it to make atonement. There could be no delay. Now, we learn from the ninth and tenth chapters of Hebrews, that He did, through the veil of His flesh, the rent veil of His flesh, pass up into the true Holy of Holies, and by the sprinkling of His blood sanctified that pattern of earth's most holy place.

8. Where, when and why does His soul return to earth? The first chapter of Hebrews tells us that His soul that had made the offering in the most Holy of Holies, re-

turned for His body, "when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world," referring to His resurrection as the reason.

9. Where is He now? I will not quote all the passages, but I want you to have a Scriptural foundation for every thought. (Acts i, 2): "Until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen"; and again in the 11th verse: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here looking into the heavens? This Jesus who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him going into heaven." And as Paul, in I Timothy iii, 16, gives a summary of the truth as follows: "First, God was manifest in the flesh, and so manifested he was justified by the Spirit; so manifested, he was recognized by the angels; so manifested, he was preached unto the nations; he was believed on where preached; and finally, he was received up into glory." So one of the fundamental articles of the truth is that our Lord Jesus Christ, having finished the work of His first advent, has now been received into glory. I want to give you some Old Testament passages on it, on His reception into heaven. I read from the twenty-fourth Psalm: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory will come in. Who is the King of glory? Jehovah, strong and mighty; Jehovah, mighty in battle." Notice this passage from the seventh chapter of Daniel; in the second chapter Daniel tells us that in the days of the Roman kings God Himself would set up a visible kingdom which would become a mountain and fill the world. In the seventh chapter he tells where He went after setting up His kingdom, and when. I commence at the 13th verse: "I saw in the night visions;

and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven, one like unto the Son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before them, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." You see there one of the objects of His being received up into glory when He had established His earthly kingdom, for enthronement and coronation.

I now quote a part of the second Psalm, which Peter quotes in direct connection: "Why do the heathen nations rage, and the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying: Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh; the Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure: Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." I say, Peter quotes that very passage, showing how Pontius Pilate and Herod conspired together; but that God set Jesus upon the throne of Zion, and gave to Him all the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.

Now, Acts vii, 55: "But Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into the heavens and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and he said: Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

10. For what purpose is he so received into glory? If you do not know that, you stand little chance to be-

come a theologian. First, He went up there to be crowned king over the kingdom He had set up here upon earth, and indeed to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords. In Acts ii, 36, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, says to the Jews: "You killed the Prince of life, but God hath made him both Lord and Christ." In Acts v, 31, he repeats again that the one whom they rejected and betrayed, God had made king. In Philippians ii, 9-11, Paul tells us what the meritorious ground of His being made king. He said: "Because he had emptied himself of his glory, and taken upon himself the form of a servant, therefore God had rightly exalted him and had given him a name which is above every other name, that before him every knee should bow and every tongue confess him." So that is one reason He is there: He is there to reign, using all authority in heaven and on earth to spread the kingdom which He established, to aid the churches and the preachers, and through the Holy Spirit to empower them to make the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord. That is one reason He is there. To this end, when He was made king, He sent down the other Paraclete, His vicar, His vicegerent, His *alter ego,* the Holy Spirit, to be with His church and in His church, and to accredit that church. And so, on the day of Pentecost, the church was baptized in the Holy Spirit and in power.

Next, He is there to complete the office of prophet. After He ascended to heaven He called Paul and gave him His gospel, and here in this book that we are studying, Revelation, He completes His prophetic office. There will not be anything more of His prophetic work; you cannot add to what He has taught; you cannot take anything from it. When He comes back next time, He does not come in a teaching capacity.

Last, He is there to complete the high priest office. I told you that one part of His priestly office was completed between His death and resurrection. The other part of it is to ever live to make intercession for His people. So Jesus is there reigning, making all things work together for good to them that love God, using every power of heaven and earth to help the churches that are carrying out His mission here on earth. He is there to intercede and offering the prayers that earth sends up. When He comes away the high priest office is ended, because He vacates the Holy of Holies. And concerning the New Jerusalem of the next chapter it is said: "I saw no temple therein," that is, no place to offer sacrifices, no place for priestly manifestations. That work is ended.

11. How long will He remain up there? We know that some people insist that from the day He left He might come back any minute; that His second coming is always imminent. Imminent means liable to happen any moment. Now, we come to the question: How long will He remain up there? I give you some scriptures on it: First, the testimony of David, which Christ Himself quoted and applied to Himself, the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand *until I make thine enemies thy footstool";* He must stay there in heaven until His enemies have been conquered. Taking Paul as a witness (I Corinthians xv, 26): "He must reign until all of his enemies are put under his feet." We do not see everything put under His feet, says Paul, but His reign must last until this is accomplished. Now, take Peter as a witness (I Peter, third chapter): "Repent ye and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out, and so that refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and so that he may send

Jesus whom the heavens must receive *until the time of the restoration of all things.*" You cannot get the force of that unless you understand "the restoration of all things"; he says: "which all of the prophets from the beginning of the world have spoken," not a thing in any Old Testament prophecy foretold as preceding His advent but must be fulfilled before He comes, and particularly is that true of the restoration of the Jews. Now, when we come to the New Testament prophecies we will find the same thing, whom the heavens must receive until every antecedent thing the New Testament prophecies have foretold is fulfilled. I want to get that idea of imminency out of your mind. The first witness is the Lord Himself, and I quoted from His great prophecy, which you will find on the 160th page of your Harmony. There the question is propounded to Jesus: "When will Jerusalem be destroyed, and what is the sign of it, and what is the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?"—these are the questions He is answering. Now, listen at Him talk on that: "Take heed that no man lead you astray; many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and shall lead many astray. Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for these things must needs come to pass, but *the end is not yet.* Nations shall rise against nations and kingdoms against kingdoms, and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places." Then He goes on to state: "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot until the time of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, and that after the long Jewish tribulation has ended by their salvation, then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." I heard one man say that he looked for Him every day. I heard a pre-millennialist say that when he got up every morning he looked out of the window to see his Lord

coming. I asked him what right he had to expect that; if the times of the Gentiles had been fulfilled; if he saw indication that the fulness of the Gentiles had come. They are yet sweeping the earth with the power of the gospel, and the Jew's salvation has not come yet. Kingdoms have fallen, pestilences have come, but this is not the sign; "the end is not yet."

Now, suppose we take Paul as a witness (II Thessalonians, chapter ii): "Do not be deceived; do not let any man lead you astray, either as reporting what I have said, or as quoting a letter purporting to come from me to the effect that the day of the Lord is at hand. *That day cannot come* until there first be the great apostasy; it cannot come until the Man of Sin be revealed"; and he will be living when Christ comes. Suppose we take Peter as a witness: in the third chapter of his second letter he tells us that "The delay in the coming of the Lord will be so great that men will be saying: Where is the promise of His coming? Ever since the fathers fell asleep everything continues just as it was since the days of our Lord." That is the testimony of Peter.

12. What is the testimony of John? We have just been over it in this book. He shows you four synchronous views of things that must happen before the final advent, whom the heavens must receive until everything spoken of by the ancient prophets has been fulfilled; until everything spoken by the New Testament prophets has been fulfilled. I once asked a man this question: "Do you suppose Peter expected the Lord Jesus Christ to come in his lifetime?" He says: "Certainly he did." "Why, then, did he write that the Lord had shown him how he was to die?" He knew he would not live until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is why Christ, and Paul, and Peter, and John, all hedge so care-

fully, take so many pains, to prevent a delusion upon this subject.

13. Will it be a long time till He comes? I will read you what He Himself says; 167th page of your Harmony; it is at the beginning of the parable of the talents, as given in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew: "As when a man going into another country, calls in his servants and delivers unto them his goods. Now, *after a long time,* the lord of these servants cometh and reckoning with them,"—after a long time. Why, then, is it said He is "coming quickly"? "Behold, I come quickly." In God's sight a thousand years are as a day, or a watch in the night, but to man it will not be quickly, not to the human race.

14. Then, is it liable to happen at any moment? Nineteen hundred years have passed away, and in the march of events some of the prophesied things have taken place: The Roman Empire has passed away; the Holy Roman Empire has passed away, and the counterfeit church is badly shattered, though on its feet yet. But you know it is not liable to happen just at any moment.

15. Why, then, does our Lord say, "Because ye know not the hour when he cometh, and as he cometh like a thief in the night, watch, be ye ready: what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch, be ready"? How do you explain that? I can make it so plain to you that a Sunday School child can see it. There is NOT a long time between YOU and the second coming of Christ. The only time between YOU and the second coming of Christ is the time between the present and your death. I mean to say that just as soon as you die you strike eternity; you are out of time, and your only time to watch and make yourself ready is while you are living. John's time to get

ready was while he was living; when he died he went into eternity, and in eternity there is no measurement of time. We have to prepare for that advent while we are living. If we put it off until the historical event of the advent, then we never will be ready.

16. What construction, then, do we put on the long time between His ascension into heaven and His second coming? Peter explains it in the third chapter of his second letter. He says: "We must construe that the long-suffering of God meaneth salvation"; "not wishing that any should perish," but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be repentant. Look at that. "Lord, why do you stay away so long?" "Because I want everybody to repent."

17. What doctrine is involved in that? That after He comes nobody can repent. Let me prove it to you; I will let Him prove it to you: Here in substance is Matthew xxv, 1-14: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be like unto ten virgins: five wise and five foolish; and while they wait for the bridegroom they slept. Five of them had oil in their lamps, and five did not." At last the cry is heard: "Behold the bridegroom; come ye forth to meet him." And the five foolish ones said, "Give us of your oil—let me borrow." You cannot borrow. "And while they were gone off to get it, he came. And they came up and knocked and said, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he said, Depart from me, I never knew you," as our song has it: "Too late! Too late! You cannot enter now." No one who waits until Christ comes can make any preparation. He comes as a thief in the night, and as suddenly as the flood came in the days of Noah, and while they were eating and drinking and giving in marriage, like a clap of thunder from a cloudless sky, the Messiah is come, and those who are

ready go in, and those who are not ready stay out forever.

18. Now, why is that true? Because the High Priest has left the place of intercession; because the kingly government is at an end. (I Corinthians xv, 25.) When He comes He comes to turn over the kingdom to the Father, and that is the end; and some people who are looking for Him to establish His kingdom after He comes, will just see Him giving up the kingdom, for the kingdom will be over.

The Spirit dispensation is over. The Spirit is His vicar while He is absent; when Christ comes back the Spirit work stops, the church work stops, and the time institution is become the bride in glory, and the bride, the elect, is complete; there is no more to be added. The memorial of the church ends. "Ye show forth his death until he comes; ye memorialize his burial and resurrection in baptism until he comes," but when He comes those ordinances stop; every office of Jesus Christ ends, but one, and I will tell you what that is in a minute.

19. Now, then, what are the purposes of His final coming? What does He come for? Why did He come the first time? And after ascending, why does He stay up yonder, and when He comes back, what is He to do? First, in general terms, to wind up the affairs of time and this world, to raise the dead, and to render His final judgment. Not another thing has He before Him when He comes; the Lord who has gone into another country for a long time comes back *to reckon with His servants.*

20. Is that day fixed? Some people who want it to happen any minute would have it a sliding scale, maybe to-day, maybe to-morrow, maybe next week. Let us ask Paul (Acts xvii, 31): *God "hath appointed a day* in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the

man whom he hath ordained: wherefore he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." It is as unalterably fixed as was the day of His first advent. I do not know the day nor the hour, nor do you, but God does; the day is appointed.

21. What the sign of this second advent? Now, I told you the sign of His first advent: "You shall see a babe in swaddling clothes lying in a manger"; that is, Christ comes in His humiliation. Now, the next time, He is to come in His glory, and you must expect a sign just as far away from the manger as possible. What is that sign? He says: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, he shall sit upon the throne of his glory." "And I saw a great white throne"; there is the sign. At the first coming I saw a babe in a manger; at the second coming, from the manger to the throne, "I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it," and the sign will be visible in the deepest darkness that ever fell upon the earth. He says so Himself. He says that after the tribulation of the Jews and their salvation, that the sun shall lose its light immediately, not immediately after the tribulation, but lose it suddenly, instantly, and the moon shall lose her light, and the stars their light, and every light in the world goes out, and against that background of total pitch darkness we see a white throne coming, the white against the blackness. Nobody will make a mistake in that; I tell you, whoever enters into that darkness and whoever sees that white throne coming, a throne, not of a king, but of a judge, the throne of final judgment, he will not make any mistake about Christ's coming.

Now, to make it clearer to you, Paul says in his first letter to the Thessalonians, fourth chapter: "He will come with a great sound of the trumpet." The earth

never heard that trumpet sound but once before, when the law was given on Mount Sinai. Then there was heard the sound of a trumpet that waxed louder and louder, until the people were terrified for their very lives. Do not adopt negro theology, which says that this is the trumpet of Gabriel to wake the dead. It is the trumpet to summon the angels when the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him. That trumpet blast in that blackness, heralding that white throne, will be the loudest thing the earth ever heard; ten thousand times ten thousand claps of thunder will not equal the roll and reverberation of that last trumpet sound. To keep you from being mistaken further, he says that "he will come with a great shout," and we know exactly what the shout is, for he tells us; we know the very words of it: "Behold the bridegroom, come ye forth to meet him." Can you mistake that?

Now, notice, please, what I tell you about anybody being saved after His second advent: "Two men shall be working in the field, and one shall be taken and the other left; two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left. Two groups of virgins, five in each, shall be waiting, one group shall be taken and the other left." Just imagine those men out in the field ploughing, and all at once darkness hides the horses and the plough handles, and then that white throne comes, and then that trumpet sounds, and then that great shout, and in a moment an angel swoops down and grabs one of the men ploughing and takes him home; the other is left.

The examination questions are embodied in the text of this chapter.

XXI

OUR LORD'S FINAL ADVENT; THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD; THE GENERAL JUDGMENT

Revelation XX, 1-15

WE will present this study in the form of a catechism:

1. Cite two distinct promises of the Second Advent.

In Matthew xvi, 27, our Saviour says: "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then shall he render to every man according to his deeds." You see that is not only the promise, but it expresses the purpose. The second promise is in Acts i, 11: "As they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This Jesus who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

2. Cite three general passages on the resurrection.

Daniel xii, 2: "Many of them that slept in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to eternal life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel puts the resurrection of both classes together. Next, John v, 28, 29, which I quote: "Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his

voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." And you see John puts them together. The third passage is in Acts xxiv, 15: "Having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust." The third passage also puts them together.

3. Now comes an exceedingly important question: Cite three striking passages apart from our present lesson to show that the resurrection and the judgment of both the righteous and the wicked are simultaneous, and not a thousand years apart.

I read from Matthew xii, 41, 42: "The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here." The men of Nineveh repented and were saved. It is distinctly declared that they shall rise up, there's their resurrection, at the judgment, showing that the resurrection and the judgment come together; they shall rise up at the judgment with this generation, the wicked people, the impenitent people, whom Christ was addressing, are to stand, there's their resurrection from the dead, in the judgment with those ancient people of Nineveh and the queen of the south; there you have the two classes, the penitent and the impenitent, the resurrection, the judgment, the general judgment. The next scripture I cite is Matthew xxv, 31-46, and as you read I want you to ask yourselves these questions: "Are these crowds together? Are

their resurrection and judgment simultaneous, or is there a great interval of time between them?"

I quote: "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separated the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life." I once asked a premillennialist what he did with that passage, and he said, "That is simply the judgment of the nations." No, sir! That is an individual judgment, and nations, as nations, are not sent into eternal fire, only individuals are.

The other general passage, which is more conclusive than these others, is II Thessalonians i, 6-10: "If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his might." When are these wicked punished with everlasting destruction? The next verse tells us: "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at

in all them that believe [because our testimony among you was believed] in that day."

I sat on the train once with a pre-millennialist and read that passage to him, and asked him if he would hold the book and answer questions according to the testimony. He said he would. I said: "According to that passage, when does Jesus recompense affliction to those who have afflicted His people?" He had to read: "At the time he recompenses his rest to those who were afflicted." I then asked him when the wicked would be punished with everlasting destruction; and he had to read: "When he comes to be glorified in his saints." Now, these are literal passages. I could cite a great many more, but these are absolutely conclusive that the resurrection and the judgment of both the good and the bad will be simultaneous.

4. Cite three parables from our Lord to the same effect.

The first is the parable of the tares, found in Matthew xiii, 24-30, and expounded by our Lord in the same chapter, 36th to 42d verses. Let us read it and see: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the blade sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And the servants of the householder came and said unto him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him: Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said: Nay, lest haply while ye gather up the tares ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, gather up first

the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." The disciples wanted that expounded to them, and here is the exposition: "Explain unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Now, that expresses the fact that the good and the evil people are to grow up together in this world until the end of the world, and then when the end of the world comes, the angels will separate the good from the bad.

The second is the parable of the dragnet, Matthew xiii, 47-50: "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to the shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So it shall be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The third parable is the parable of the talents, Matthew xxv, 14-30: "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man travelling in a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one

he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey. . . . After a long time the lord of these servants cometh, and reckoneth with them . . . [and then he goes on with the reckoning until he gets to the one with only one talent] . . . His lord said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knowest I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed: thou oughtst, therefore, have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I would have received mine own with usury. Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Now, there are three great parables. I could mention others, but these three are sufficient to put beside the three passages which show the simultaneousness of the resurrection of the dead and the separation of the righteous from the wicked, and the final judgment.

5. Cite and expound two great passages on the resurrection of the righteous dead, and the glorification of the righteous living.

In I Corinthians xv, 42-55, is described the meaning of the resurrection of the righteous dead: "It was sown in weakness, it is raised in strength; it was sown in dishonour, it is raised in honour; it was sown a mortal body and raised an immortal body; it was sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body." Then in the same connection he tells of the change that takes place in the righteous who are living at the time when Christ comes: "I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep." That

is, we shall not all die; some men will be living when Christ comes, and then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they shall be changed without ever dying, and glorification takes place. That is the meaning of all those words I quoted you a while ago about honour, dishonour, etc.

Now, the second passage is in the first letter to the Thessalonians, and the closing paragraph of the fourth chapter. He says: "Brethren, I would not have you ignorant concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow now, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. . . . And the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

6. What erroneous views were held concerning the resurrection of the body, and the objections thereto?

First, the Sadducees, who were materialists, and denied all future life, whether of the soul or of the body, and of course denied the resurrection of the body. In the twenty-second chapter of Matthew, twelfth chapter of Mark and twentieth chapter of Luke, we have an account of the Sadducees coming to the Lord with the question: Where a man married and died, and according to the Mosaic law his brother took his widow; and he died, and the second brother took her, and so on until seven brothers had her. Now who will be the husband of this woman in the resurrection, for they all had her?

They thought they had sprung an insuperable difficulty in the way of the resurrection of the dead. He replied to them: "In the state of the resurrection of the dead there is no marrying, nor giving in marriage, but all are as the angels of heaven," that is, the multiplying and replenishing of the earth which so dominated men here on the earth, does not apply in heaven.

In Corinth some church members denied the resurrection of the body, and based their objections on scientific deductions. In I Corinthians xv, 12, 35, he says: "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead, and you ask: With what bodies shall they rise?"—presenting that as an insuperable difficulty, and all of that chapter is devoted to a discussion of the certainty of the resurrection of the body. There were certain heretics at Ephesus who held that regeneration was the resurrection, and hence it was past already. Paul mentions the names of two of these heretics Hymeneus and Philetus, in the second letter to Timothy, second chapter, 17th and 18th verses. They held that the resurrection took place when a man was converted; that it was past already. Paul counts them heretics, and says that their teaching is exceedingly hurtful to many.

Then there are people (though I do not find this in the Bible, but in history) who hold that the resurrection is simply the escape of the soul from the limitations of the body at death, and they compare it with the emergence of the butterfly from the chrysalis state, never having any more use for that empty shell, and living in another element, or air instead of upon the ground. A great many people believe that; it is different from the Sadducees. The Sadducees did not believe in any future life, nor in angels, nor in spirits of any kind, as you

learn from Acts xxiii, 8; they were utter materialists; they believed that this life is all; that when a man dies, all of him dies, that he has no dual life now, and that there is no such thing as a spiritual existence, good or bad.

7. If the righteous who are living when Christ comes are changed without death, what becomes of the living wicked?

My answer is that they perish, or die, in the great world-wide fire that accompanies the coming of the Lord. Malachi gives a glowing description of it in the fourth chapter, 1st to 3d verses. I read you what Malachi says about it: "For behold, the day cometh, it burneth like a furnace, and all the proud and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healings in its wings; and ye shall go forth and gambol as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I make, saith Jehovah of hosts."

Now, read a passage from Peter: "And in the last days men will say: Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God, by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word, have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. . . .

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, in the which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with a fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are all thus to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat?"

No wicked man can escape physical death; there never has been one that escaped. Elijah and Enoch did; they were good men. And all the saints living at the coming of Christ will, but the wicked living when Christ comes will burn up in the fire, just as now when one living in a house which catches on fire is burned up before he can escape. That world fire will be as quick as a lightning flash; there is no element of time in it; in one moment the atmosphere shall become an ocean of fire, and the ocean itself, by one elemental change, shall become an ocean of fire, and the fire will sweep from mountain to mountain, and from continent to continent, until the whole world is afire. And in that fire every living wicked person dies, and it happens in a moment, and their resurrection immediately follows. They are so close together that one may call them simultaneous.

8. What the ground of their resurrection? Why should the wicked be raised at all?

The normal man, as God created him, was a dual being—soul and body. The death of the body, or rather the separation of the soul from the body, is the result of sin. The soul in a disembodied state is unclothed, and hence Hades, as a state, gains a victory so long as it holds a disembodied spirit. But when God raises the

bodies of the dead, good and bad, then shall be brought to pass the saying: O death, where is thy sting; O Hades, where is thy victory? You had a victory so long as you could hold one soul in a disembodied state. Hence this book, as we learn in chapter vi, verse 8, says that Hades followed after death. Death came, and the soul went into a disembodied state. Moreover, the only deeds of which the final judgment takes cognizance are the deeds done in the body. A man who died when Christ died, in eternity ever since, will never be judged for anything that he does in eternity; the judgment takes cognizance of only the deeds done in the body. Therefore, the whole man, soul and body, must be present at the judgment, and if condemned must be punished in both body and soul.

It is not enough that the rich man, at his death, should be tormented as to his soul. "He lifted up his eyes in hell [or Hades], being in torment." That is not enough. But, as our Lord says, "Be ye not afraid of them which kill the body but cannot kill the soul, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [Gehenna]."

9. In what capacity or office did our Lord appear in His first advent, and contrast it with His office in His second advent?

Paul says in the letter to the Hebrews: "Inasmuch as it was appointed unto men once to die, and after death then cometh judgment, so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from a sin-offering, to them that await for him unto salvation" (Hebrews ix, 27, 28). Which means that His second advent is not to offer a sacrifice,—that is all ended,—but as judge, to bring His people into the fruition of salvation, and the salvation

of fruition, which, as Peter says, is ready to be revealed at the last time (I Peter i, 4, 5).

Now we will take up the study word by word:

10. Twentieth chapter, 11th verse: "And I saw a great white throne."

What the distinction between this throne and the one in Revelation iv, 2-7?

That was the throne of grace, the mediatorial throne, Christ reigning as king and interceding as priest. This is the white throne of final judgment. That throne at iv, 2, might be approached by prayer, as we learned in Hebrews iv, 16: "Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need." And as we learned in the eighth chapter of this book: the prayers of the saints, mingled with incense, came up to that throne. But no prayers are offered at this white throne; praying days are over forever. This our Lord Himself describes in His great prophecy, which I quote (Matthew xxiv, 29-31): "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heavens, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," and as our Lord said at the conclusion of that prophecy (Matthew xxv, 31): "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." Or, as this book expresses it, when He came to the sixth seal, you remember (Revelation vi, 12), "and I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became

as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs, and the heaven was removed as a scroll when rolled up, and every mountain and island moved out of their place, and the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich and strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks: Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand?"

11. Who the judge, and what his suitableness?

In John v, *22-27*, it is said: "The Father hath given all judgment unto the Son——" and He goes on to say that He is given this judgment because He is also the Son of man. He is suitable, for He is God, and knows all the holiness of God's law; He is suitable because He is man, and as man was tempted as we are, and with an infinite knowledge of our infirmities, and our failings, and our environment. Even for the devil, He is the best judge.

12. We read on in Revelation: "And I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." What does it mean by the disappearance of the heaven and the earth?

Annihilation is not meant; the flood that swept the earth did not annihilate it; neither does this fire, but it purges it. Peter describes it. I read it to you a while ago (II Peter iii, 7, 10, 11, 12). That fire will come, and in that fire heaven and earth scenes will disappear, but he says that we will have a new heaven and a new earth.

13. We read again in the study: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne.

. . . And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them." What is meant by the sea and death giving up the dead in them?

It means the resurrection of the bodies of all the dead, whether buried on land or in the sea, just as our Lord said: "The hour cometh when all that are in the tomb shall hear his voice and shall come forth," or as Daniel put it: "They that sleep in the dust of the earth, some to eternal life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

14. What is meant by Hades giving up the dead that are in it?

It means the coming forth of all the disembodied souls, reunited to their raised bodies. Hades means the spirit world. David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, said: "Moreover, my flesh shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades." The flesh is raised when the time is come for Hades to give up its dead, and the soul and body shall be reunited.

15. While Hades, as a state of being disembodied, applies equally to all souls, is there not some distinction of place and condition? Yes, the souls of both the rich man and Lazarus went into Hades, but between the places in Hades where they were is a great gulf fixed, so that one may not cross to the other. Lazarus, starved on earth, is feasting at the banquet of God with Abraham, while the rich man, faring sumptuously on earth, is starving and parching with the thirst in the flames. The Greeks held that in Hades there were two widely separate compartments, one of joy and one of woe, the first called "Paradise," and the second called "Tartarus," and New Testament writers accept this distinction. Jesus said to the dying robber on the cross: "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The man left his

body behind, but his soul went with the soul of Jesus into Paradise. Paul says: "I was caught up into the third heaven, into the Paradise of God." Peter says: "God spared not the angels when they sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and committed them to a pit of darkness to be reserved unto the judgment" (II Peter ii, 4). In some respects the Greek word "hades" is like the Hebrew word "sheol," the underworld or abode of disembodied spirits. The souls of both good and bad went into Sheol, but not the same place or condition of Sheol. Isaiah, in his own sublime imagery, compares the king of Babylon to Lucifer, cast down to Sheol, the torment part of the pit, and represents all Sheol, from underneath, as moved to meet him at his coming; it stirs up its dead for him. The soul of the king of Babylon is entering Sheol, the part where the wicked are, and here is what they say to him: "Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like us? . . . Is this the man that made the earth tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world a wilderness, and overthrew the cities thereof; that let not loose his prisoners to their homes?" (Isaiah xiv, 9-17). This is a sublime conception of the greeting to the lost soul on entering Tartarus. Just imagine that rich man in hell, who said: "Tell Lazarus to go and tell my brothers who live in yonder world not to come here where I am," but when he sees his brothers coming he will say: "Are you become as weak as I am?"

The Paradise part of Hades is just the same as heaven itself, as appears from Hebrews xii, 22-24, where "the spirits of the just made perfect are with the Father, with Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, with the angels on the heavenly Mount Zion, in the heavenly Jerusalem." And it also appears from what Paul says to the Corin-

thians (II Corinthians v, 1, 2, and xii, 2, 3): "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved [this body], we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens," and goes on to say that as long as I am in this body I am absent from the Lord, and when I am out of this body I am present with the Lord.

In I Thessalonians iv, 14, it is said: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Now, in the same way, Tartarus is equal to what we call hell, the place of eternal fire and torment, the only difference being the absence of the body until the resurrection. Tartarus is hell now, just the same hell it will be when a lake of fire, but the body is not in it yet. When the saint's body is raised, the whole man, soul and body, goes back to Paradise, where his soul has been since death (see Revelation xxii, 1, 2, 14); they re-enter the Paradise of God. When the wicked man's body is raised, the whole man, soul and body, goes back into the same Tartarus where his soul had been. It is now called Gehenna, or in this lesson it is called a lake of fire.

16. If Paradise be heaven, and Tartarus be hell, except for the absence of the body, why are the righteous, in their souls, already enjoying heaven, to which they went at death, and why are the wicked, already tormented in the flames of hell, to which their souls went at death, why are they brought from those conditions to be judged; seeing that they are already enjoying or suffering the final verdict or sentence?

The answer lies (1) in the fact that the day of judgment is not so much a day of actual trial, but as Paul describes it, it is a day of the *revelation* of the righteous judgments of God, judgments already rendered. The

unbeliever is already condemned, says John; he does not wait to come to the judgment to be condemned; he is already condemned for not believing on Jesus Christ. The book of life, which determines the case of both classes, is not a docket for trial that day, but it is a register of judicial decisions already rendered. The object of the general judgment is to make all who have been previously condemned or acquitted, see, understand and approve the past verdict which acquits or condemns. The acquitted up to that day never fully understood the grounds of their acquittal (see Matthew xxv, 37-40): "Lord, when did we see thee naked and clothed thee, or sick and visited thee, or a stranger and entertained thee?" They do not understand, and the same chapter shows that the wicked do not understand. The rich man in hell did not understand, but when the revelation of the judgment which put him there comes in white light and illumines, he will then understand and confess the righteousness of the judgment of God that sent him to that place of torment. Now, when the records of past judgments are opened, both classes comprehend and recognize the righteousness of the past judgment which sent the soul of one to heaven and the soul of the other to hell. They now approve and acquiesce in God's judgment, though it had gone against them. "Therefore," says Paul, "before Jesus, the Judge, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess his name,"—the lost as well as the saved.

Not only does each man at the judgment see the justice of the verdict in his own case, but also in the cases of the others. He will be as much surprised and enlightened on this point as any other: some will be first that he counted last, and some will be last that he counted first.

17. Is it largely on this account that all angels, good and bad, and the human race, are all brought together in one great assembly?

Yes; the contrast of the cases constitutes much of the light. The penitent men of Nineveh, saved by hearing only one sermon, and the vision-seeking queen of Sheba, at the judgment will throw their brilliant cross light on the wicked generation of Christ's day, who had much more light and did not act on it. "Sodom and Gomorrah," says our Lord, "Tyre and Sidon, shall suffer a more tolerable judgment than the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida," and this cross light will furnish abundant lessons.

18. Why could not this light have been given sooner to the sinner?

The revelation is put off until the last day because the influence of human thought, desire and deeds does not cease until they strike the shores of eternity. The influence of Tom Paine's "Age of Reason" and Ingersoll's speeches will go on until the final harvest, and it will not be known how much evil each one has done until we come to the end of the influence. And so Abel, though dead, yet speaketh. All our lives will throw light or shadows on the pathway of others until the end of the world. John Bunyan's Pilgrim will go marching on till Jesus comes; Keith's great hymn, "How Firm a Foundation," and Cowper's sweet hymn, "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood," have not yet reached their final harvest.

Edgar Allan Poe brings out the thought in his flight with an angel, who shows him a volcanic island, barren and desolate, and said: "That is an idle, evil word, spoken once and then forgot; but it went on sounding until the end of time, and God crystallized it into the vol-

canic island." Again the angel showed him another island of springs and fountains, green with the verdure of grass and the foliage of fruit-bearing trees, in whose boughs a choir of singing birds were praising God. "This," said the angel, "is a good word you spoke once, and forgot, but it went on in power until it struck the shores of eternity, and God crystallized it into this blessed island."

19. What are the books out of which men are judged? We may not name them all, but these are some of them:

(1) The book of remembrance; you will find the account of it in Malachi iii, 16-18. In a time of great spiritual tribulations some of the good people will get together and deplore the absence of a revival, and God will command the Recording Angel to put down in the book of remembrance what they said.

(2) The book of curses (Zechariah v, 1, 2): "Then again I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold a flying roll, and he said unto me, What seeth thou? and I answered: I see a flying roll, the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me: This is the curse that goeth forth over the whole land, for every one that stealeth shall be cut off on the one side according to it and every one that sweareth shall be cut off on the other side according to it. I will cause it to go forth, saith Jehovah of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by name, and it shall abide in the midst of his house, and shall consume the timber thereof and the stones thereof."

(3) Then there is a book of tears (Psalms lvi, 8): "Put thou my tears into thy bottle; are they not in thy book?" I tell you that will be a marvellous book at the judgment; when on the judgment throne a book is

opened, with nothing but splotches on it where tears fell: Who made the widow weep? who made the orphan cry? who brought sorrow into the house of the sick? I tell you that God keeps every tear that falls from a sufferer's eye, and at the judgment that book will be opened. There will be the tears that Jesus wept over Jerusalem. It will be an awful book.

(4) Then there is the book of the covenant. You remember when the covenant was made with Moses, the book was put in the ark, to be held as an everlasting witness. At the day of judgment the Lord will say: "I need not judge you; Moses will judge you. Just bring out that covenant and read it to him. Did you abide by it?"

(5) Finally, there is the book of life: "Another book was opened, which is the book of life."

20. What is this book of life?

It is a register of judicial decisions. Whenever a man is converted, justified, or acquitted, his name is written in that book. It holds the record of all the saved from the beginning to the end of time.

21. Which is the decisive book?

That book of life, because this lesson shows that whosoever is not found written in that book shall be cast into the lake of fire. You remember that Baptist song: "When my righteous judge shall come to take Thy ransomed people home, shall I among them stand; shall I, who sometimes am afraid to die, be found at Thy right hand? O, can I bear the piercing thought: what if my name should be left out?" Whosoever is not found written in that book—well, that is all you need.

I will suppose there is a man—Mr. A——, say—in Fort Worth, County of Tarrant, State of Texas, United States of America, living in such a period; open the

book of life to that name. Do you see his name there? No. That is sufficient; pass him into the lake of fire. Do you see his name on the book of remembrance? No. Do you see his name in the book of curses? Yes.

22. What is the great principle of this judgment?

Each man is judged according to his light, privileges, opportunities and environment.

23. What is the only thing of which this judgment takes cognizance?

One's attitude toward Christ in His gospel, His cause and His people. The bad angels will have to say: We opposed; the good angels will say: We ministered unto the heirs of salvation. The wicked will say: Salvation came right to my door, the stream of life lapped against my doorsill, and I said no, no.

24. Apply this to good angels, and show what advantage it is to them.

They did not sin before, and now they have stood for Christ's cause and His people, and they will become confirmed, for after the judgment no angel can ever fall.

25. What proof have we that on that day the acquitted participate with Christ in judging the world and the angels?

"Ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew xiv, 28). "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that the saints shall judge the angels?" It will be fine poetic justice when Job and Peter pass judgment on the devil, who tried them so much; it will be a great sight to see Agrippa, Festus and Nero judged by Paul; they judged him on earth; he

will judge them in eternity. It will be a fine thing to see those who are despised in this world, sit with Christ on His throne, passing judgment upon demons and the wicked lost.

26. On what score are the saints judged that day, and the proof, and the reasons?

The saints are not put on trial for their lives that day; all that was ended when they were justified: they will not have to come into the judgment on that score; they have passed out of death into eternal life, and none can bring a charge against God's elect, but they are judged on their fidelity, on their lives as Christians, and shall receive the last reward. The salvation of all the saved is the same, but the rewards of the saints are different. They all get into salvation alike, through one door, Christ; but their rank and position in heaven is determined by their Christian fidelity.

27. Are there also degrees in hell?

Jesus said: "It shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida."

28. What do you understand by the lake of fire?

First, it is a place; all finite things must be posited. Second, it is a prepared place, originally prepared for the devil and his demons, but there is room enough in it for those who follow the devil. It is a prison; Peter says: "The spirits in prison"; Jude says: "The demons cast down in chains and bondage." It is a place of torment, weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. It is a place of companionship without friendship: you will have the company of liars, thieves, murderers, idolaters; you will have the company of the devil and his demons, but it will not be a happy crowd. It is a place of conscience, memory and despair; the mind does not quit

thinking, the conscience does not quit aching, but hope never comes. It is eternal: "These shall go away into everlasting fire"—that is the same word used when it says everlasting life—thus when you shorten hell you shorten heaven; the same word applies to both. Pollok, in the "Course of Time," vainly tried to describe hell. He says: "Wide was the place, and deep as wide, and ruinous as deep, while overhead and all around winds war with winds, and thunders roll, and lightnings, forked lightnings, flash." God pity the man who dares come into the pulpit and preach against His eternal judgment.

The examination questions are embodied in the text of this chapter, it being presented in the form of a catechism.

XXII

THE FUTURE ETERNAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

Revelation XXI, 1—XXII, 5

I WANT to say, as impressively as I know how to say it, that the reason Christian people are no happier than they are, the reason they have so little power, is that they have such a misty conception of heaven, of the world to come. And whatever is misty, is painful. It is only those who, with a clear understanding of God's word as to the outcome of human life, those who by faith see eternal things, and feel the powers of the world to come, who can make any lasting impression for good in this world. I do not care how much learning a preacher may have, if he has not a clear conception of heaven and its eternity, of hell and its eternity, he cannot be a man of spiritual power. I wish I could make everybody feel on this subject as I feel, and not occasionally only, but all the time. So far as I am concerned, the question of the death of the body does not concern me in the least, and it has not for a great many years. All the time before me is the glorious light and the blessed state of the world to come. I have never gotten away from the influence of my first apprehension of it.

With reference to the world to come, you understand that heaven is a place, " I go to prepare a place for you,"

and hell is a place. All finite beings must be posited; they must have locality. Only the Infinite One can be everywhere, but all finite beings must always be somewhere. I want you to get clearly in your mind the idea of a place, then of the condition of that place, then of the companionship of that place, then of the eternity of that condition, place and companionship.

1. What is meant by a new heaven and a new earth?

Before answering this question we must determine the meaning of certain words and statements. First, the word "new." There are two Greek words that may be rendered into the English "new": one, "neos," which simply means new in appearance; the other is "kainos," and that means new in kind. It is "kainos," or new in kind, that is employed here, and that you may get the true conception of the word, I will quote it as it is elsewhere used in some of the passages of the New Testament. For instance, our Lord said: "The instructed scribe shall bring forth out of his treasure things new and old"; there is the new contrasted with the old (Matthew xiii, 52). The Lord said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke xxii, 20.) There is not only a difference between the old and new covenant in appearance, but there is a difference in kind. Jesus was buried in a new tomb (kainos), as distinguished from an old sepulchre, which had been used for a place of burial.

The next word that we need to understand is the word "regeneration." When it is applied to conversion it means a new birth. You were once born according to the flesh, but now you are born according to the spirit. This word "regeneration" (Greek "palingenesia") applied to the spiritual birth in Titus iii, 5, is thus used in Matthew: "You who have followed me, shall in the *regeneration* sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve

tribes of Israel." This regeneration does not refer to man, but to the earth. This regeneration of the earth is accomplished by the world-wide fire, as the new earth occupied by Noah was accomplished by the world-wide flood. It is to this event that Paul refers in the eighth chapter of Romans: "The creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Now, at the resurrection of the dead there will be a new birth of the earth,—a birth that comes by fire.

The next word is "apokatastaseos," and it means "restoration." Peter says to the Jews: "Repent that your sins may be blotted out, and so that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and so that he may send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the time of 'apokatastaseos,' the restoration of all things." Whatever, then, this word "kainos" (new), and this word "palingenesia" (regeneration), and this word "apokatastaseos" (restoration) mean, they describe the earth and the heaven after the resurrection.

It will be recalled that in bringing the earth material out of chaos, the firmament, or atmosphere, was created, —that is, the heavens in the ordinary sense; the sky above us,—and that atmosphere by its specific gravity, its weight, separated the waters above from the waters below. That is, the waters converted into vapours until lighter than air would go up, but when in clouds it be-

came heavier than air, it would be precipitated to the earth again in fog, rain, hail or snow. It is the atmosphere and its weight that brings about that separation. Hence when the earth was about to be destroyed by the flood, God reversed that process, "and the windows of heaven were opened"; the atmosphere was broken open; it lost its specific gravity; the fountains of the deep were broken up, and that division of the waters above from the waters below, and the land from the sea, was all done away with in the flood. But after a while that flood subsides, and coming out of it there is a new atmosphere, —new heaven, new firmament, new earth,—which Noah occupies. Tremendous changes were wrought in the physical surface of the earth by the flood,—the evidences of it are to be found in the highest mountain ranges, and you need not pay attention to those who tell you that a universal flood was impossible. It was as universal as the fire will be.

Now, that flood did not annihilate the earth, but it changed it so that it is called a new earth. So that fire, which leaps out at the resurrection of the dead, will not annihilate the earth, but will change it, and out of that flood of fire a new earth appears. That is the meaning of those terms.

We will also recall that when man sinned, that earth which God had pronounced good when He made it, was cursed,—it was made subject to vanity, but subjected in the hope of restoration in the redemption of our bodies in the resurrection. So we may conclude that that destruction by fire does not annihilate, but changes, and as God pronounced the creation good until marred by sin, so the removal of sin and all evil agencies will bring restoration. At any rate, our next chapter shows that Paradise is regained,—the Paradise in which Adam and

Eve lived is regained in all its spiritual power. This new creation will be here for occupation—and occupation by man,—but occupation under new conditions adapted to his glorified body, which brings us to the next question:

2. What is the meaning of "And the sea is no more"?

I am not sure that I can satisfy myself, much less you, as to what that means. It may be literally true that after that fire there will be no more ocean. In the convulsions of that great upheaval the bottom of the sea may upheave. As it now stands, three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered by water. I say we may consider it that way, because we have construed the earth literally, and the firmament literally, and if so, why not consider the sea literally? Or it may mean that there is no more sea in the sense of a barrier between nations. Under present conditions it is a barrier. For many centuries the Atlantic Ocean barred the approach to this Western continent; we had to wait nearly fifteen centuries after Christ to discover this continent. The sea was in the way.

But, under the new conditions of spiritual bodies, we would not need any ships, because the glorified man does not move by laboured action, but by volition. He wills to move, and so moves, through the air easier than a bird can fly, and more swiftly than a flash of lightning. He will be as the angels of heaven. While Daniel was yet praying, an angel swooped and touched him; who can measure the swiftness of his flight? There will be no barrier between the nations, because nationality will have perished; there is a unity of race into one great family of God. There are no longer linguistic barriers, as Babel when tongues were confused so that they could not understand each other. And as at Pentecost, tongues were given that they might understand each other, this was

a forecast of that heavenly condition when every man and woman and child in glory not only can understand each other's speech, but also the tongues of angels: "Now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known."

3. What the meaning of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem? Your lesson goes on to say: "And I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem." What is the meaning of that?

As there was an earthly capital of earthly Israel, called Jerusalem, so there shall be a heavenly capital of spiritual Israel. Paul, to the Galatians, says: "Jerusalem that is above is free," and to the Hebrews he says: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." One of the promises of this book, already considered, says: "I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God." Our Lord Himself has stated: "Let not your hearts be troubled. . . . In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also" (John xiv, 1). Of Abraham it is said that the reason he was a sojourner on earth, was that "he looked for the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And of the other Pilgrims on earth it is said, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews: "They desire a better country, that is a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed of them to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city."

Now, let us note the measure of that city: the passage measures it for you. You will recall that when Jerusalem of the restoration after the captivity was about to be measured, and a young man with tape-line started out

to measure it, an angel said: Stop that young man; do not let him put that measurement on Jerusalem; for Jerusalem will extend into the country, and take in the villages and the whole outlying territory. What a pity that we cannot speak to all the young men who go out with their narrow and restricted tape-lines to measure the city and government of God!

4. What the dimensions of the city?

Now, the text says the circuit of this city was 12,000 furlongs,—I am giving you the symbolical numbers; that would be 1,500 miles, and as it was square, that means that each side was 375 miles. Suppose we take 375 miles as the side of a square city: 375 times 375 miles is 140,625 square miles. That gives you its surface area. But the city is as high as it is long or broad, so we have to go up 375 miles, and make a cube, or hexagon, with six sides. Now, multiply your 140,625 by the 375 miles high, and you get over fifty-two million cubic miles. Suppose you put it into stories, each story a mile high and with 140,625 square miles surface, and then another story on top of that, and so on up. Talk about your modern skyscrapers! Elevators? You won't need any elevators! If you are down on the street of that city, and you want to go to the top story, you will to be there, and there you are. You do not need any machinery to pull you up in your glorified body.

5. How does it compare with ancient Jerusalem, and what the meaning of these symbolic numbers?

Just think of the circuit of ancient Jerusalem,—four miles. You could ride around ancient Jerusalem in an hour,—all around it. Whatever these symbolic numbers mean, they certainly mean that there will be a great many people saved to occupy so great a city,—and that is only the capital. Multiply the square miles in London or

New York a thousandfold, and it would not even approximate the dimensions of this New Jerusalem: "In my Father's house are many mansions."

6. Describe its wall and give its boundaries; what symbols show the richness of the city?

Now, in addition to the size of the city thus expressed, there is a wall that enclosed the city, how close to it the record does not say,—it may be the boundaries of the earth. That wall, if you use the sacred cubit of 22 inches as a measure, is 260 feet high; if you use the 18-inch cubit measure, it is 216 feet high. It is a higher wall than this earth ever saw,—higher by far than the walls of ancient Babylon. The great Chinese wall, built as a barrier to Tartar invasion, may start you on the idea. This wall goes all around the city, and the twelve foundations of the wall have on them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The city is four-sided, just as the ancient court around the tabernacle, looking north, south, east and west, around which the twelve tribes camped, three on each side. The richness of the city cannot be conceived: the streets are of gold, and every one of the twelve gates is solid pearl. That is symbolical language, but the idea of the symbolism is to convey to you a richness that passes beyond the realization of any man having knowledge of only such things as we see here. "Oh when, thou city of my God, shall I thy courts ascend?" Those gates, however, are never shut,—they are always open, because there is no evil to shut out. The devil and his demons and every evil man is in prison forever in the lake of fire, and as your lesson says, all the nations of the saved pour through the gates of that city to worship God.

7. What are not found there and what things are abiding?

The light of the city is God Himself,—nothing that the mind of man has ever conceived of in the way of brilliancy can even approximate the white light and eternal radiance of that God who is light, and in whom there is no darkness. He is the light of it; the black wing of night never flaps over it; there is no night there. There is no pain there; there is no weeping and mourning for the dead, for none die; there is no death there; tongues have ceased and prophecies have ceased, but abiding forever are hope, love, faith,—these three. There is only love to God, and love to the fellow-man, a high and holy love, and faith and hope; those are the conditions. It is an eternal condition of inexpressible felicity and joy. No wonder Dr. Chalmers, in the greatest sermon he ever preached on the expulsive power of a new affection, used somewhat this language: "Oh, if some island of the blessed could be loosed from its heavenly moorings and glide down the stream of time and pass by in our sight just one time, so that we might see the unflecked serenity of its skies, and inhale the fragrance of its flowers, and be ravished by the melodious strains of its music, and catch just one time the sheen of the apparel of its inhabitants,—never again would we be satisfied with this world." I was once literally swept off my feet by hearing four thousand Methodists in a tent meeting sing that song,

"Have you heard, have you heard of that sun-bright clime,
Undimmed by sorrow and unhurt by time;
Where age hath no power o'er fadeless frame:
Where the eye is fire, and the heart is flame;
Have you heard of that sun-bright clime?"

When the thoughts of heaven sweep down on us, when the glory of that heavenly city comes into the mind, I

tell you, we have a revival,—power rests on the feeblest saint.

8. What three figures are used in presenting this heavenly place?

You are to understand that this heavenly city is presented in three figures: First, this city; second, the Lamb's wife; third, by Paradise. Right in the centre of the city is the throne of God, and bubbling up from under that throne is a water system that branches into four heads, as in ancient Paradise, running in four directions,—the water of life, flowing freely. And on either side of it is the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, and yielding its fruit every month,—the flowers never cease to bloom, the fruit never ceases to ripen, the stream never hushes its music as it outflows, and every ripple of it says, "Life, life, eternal life."

9. What, then, the object of the book?

So, whether we consider heaven as a glorious city, or the city as an image, of the church in glory, or as Paradise regained, we see "the restoration of all things." God knew, when He made this world, how He wanted it, but the devil thought to thwart Him; he did take possession of it for a time. The object of this great book of the New Testament, this closing book, this last flash of revelation, is to show you preachers, you women workers, that all of this earth shall be redeemed from the power of the devil, and that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will "never lose its power till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more," and you ought to live on that thought. You may stumble occasionally; you may fall occasionally, but always get up facing heaven. I always said, when I was a wicked sinner, that if I was ever converted the first thing I would do after being converted would be to read Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Prog-

ress," or the sojourner's travel to the heavenly city. And when I got back home, lying down, happy in my conversion, my hands over my face, my mother came and pulled my hands away, and said: "My son, you have found the Saviour." That night I sat by her bedside and read John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." And I tell you, when I got to that part of the book where Beulah Land is described, or where, from the mountains delectable, one might see the glory of the heavenly city, with only the river of death between, and the shining ones coming down to the river and beckoning you to come over and waiting to receive you when you crossed, I got my great conception of heaven right then, and have never lost it since.

There was a lady schoolmate of mine, a brilliant girl and a very dear friend. We went different ways when we left school. One day I received a note written on the margin of a newspaper, saying: "If you are my old schoolmate, as I think you are, come to see me before I die, and bring your church choir with you." I went, and found her heart-broken and dying. When I entered the room she said: "I did not send for you to tell me how to die: I know, I know. But I tell you what I wish you would do: get your singers to sing a hymn. I want to be upborne on the wings of melody as I ascend to heaven." I asked: "What do you want us to sing?" "Sing this song: 'Oh, sing to me of heaven when I am called to die; sing songs of holy ecstasy to waft my soul on high.'" We sang it, in tears, and when we got through, in the sweetest, faintest voice, she repeated the last verse and ended with a sigh. She was dead. So music cheered her last breath on earth, and greeted her first taste of heaven.

It may sound fanciful, but I sometimes am carried

away with the thought that if I could get together the preachers and the working forces of the churches, and keep them studying for a few days on the Bible teachings of heaven, until the clearness, and certainty, and eternity of heaven and hell got hold on them, they would know how to work.

10. Who the inhabitants of this city?

You have learned in our study about heaven as a place, heaven as a state, and now I close with a reference to its companionship. Paul says: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel" (Hebrews xii, 22-24). That is companionship divine, angelic and human. But the greatest of all the joys will be when we come to Jesus and, taking off the crowns His gracious hands placed on our brows, lay them down at His pierced feet, and say: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto Thy name be honour and power and glory and dominion for ever." Yes, we are coming to Jesus; we are coming to the innumerable host of angels, ten thousand times ten thousands of thousands and thousands of the shining ones we have heard so much about in this book; we are coming to the general assembly, the church of the firstborn who are written in heaven, and who, standing on the walls of everlasting deliverance, and looking down toward the earth once ruled by the devil, all of its mountain sides scarred with battle, all of its valleys crimson with blood, all of its caves filled with the bones of the murdered, all of its seas filled with the

wrecks of those who perished in battle and storm, we shall look down on it, and we will see all of it washed whiter than snow. I do not say that we shall be limited to the earth in the world to come; I do not suppose there will be any barrier to our going to any part of the universe. But God intended that man should have dominion over the earth.

11. Who are forbidden to enter this city?

Before we leave the subject I ought to say this sad thing: "On the outside are the fearful," those who lacked moral courage, those who were ashamed to say: "I am for Christ," that were ashamed to stand by Him, ashamed to confess Him in public. "On the outside are all liars, and all whoremongers, and all idolaters." That is the crowd that is on the outside forever. They, too, have a place, prepared for the devil and his angels; they, too, have companionship: but what a crowd! what a crowd! Who wants to be with them forever? If it chill your heart to be associated now with one unclean, foul, slimy soul, what will it be to company with all the lost forever?

The examination questions are in the body of the text, it being presented in the form of a catechism.

XXIII

EPILOGUE

Revelation XXII, 6-21

THE exposition of this marvellous and delightful book closes with this chapter. As the first chapter is the prologue of the book, this study from the 6th to 21st verses of the twenty-second chapter is the epilogue of the book. Most of the terms of the first chapter are here repeated to show that the purpose of the revelation there announced is here consummated. No other Bible book has more striking marks of unity. The first sentence: "These words are faithful and true," authenticates the whole book. The second sentence connects it in unity and authority with all the preceding books of the sacred history. That sentence: "The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass," means that the Lord who bestowed upon each of the Old Testament prophets, and on each of the preceding New Testament prophets, that measure of the gift of the Holy Spirit to qualify him to write his part of the sacred canon, inspired this closing book also, making it the capstone and the climax of all revelation. It follows that the whole library has one author, all the parts are correlated into one complete system of revelation. In every case, from Moses to John, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Paul had said

collectively of the Old Testament scriptures: "They are the sacred scriptures," distinguishing them from all secular and profane writings; and then said of them distributively, "pasagraphe theopneustos," every one of the writings is God-inspired.

This second sentence of our study not only virtually affirms the same thing of the New Testament books, but links both Testaments into one inspired unity.

Read the next two verses: "And I, John, am he who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God." Here are two great lessons: First, that angels are not to be adored: Worship God. So Paul wrote to the Colossians: "Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels . . . which had indeed a show of will worship," etc. That kind of worship, which the human will has devised, has cursed all Christendom as well as heathendom, worshipping the creature rather than the Creator. Huge ecclesiasticisms, particularly the Romanist and Greek churches, claiming to be the highest expressions of Christianity, are in the main elaborate systems of idolatry, angelolatry, Mariolatry, adoration of the mass, the images, saints, relics, and a thousand other superstitions.

The second lesson: Not only do the words of the angel show a fraternity of Old and New Testament prophets, but a fellow-service of both with the angels: "I am a fellow-servant with thee and with the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book." You see that sentence blends into one great family of God the saints

of all ages and the angels who have been the ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

Read the next verse: "He saith unto me: Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." Here, again, we gather two important lessons. First, while more than once in this book we have seen the temporary sealing up, or suppression of the outcome of the synchronous views until the crowning climax of all of them arrives (see chapters viii, 1; x, 4), and yet at the end of the whole book it is opened forever; no man can ever seal up any part of this book. It is a revelation; it is meant to be understood. A benediction is pronounced on the hearer, the reader and the keeper of the words of the book, but if we do not understand the book, we cannot keep its words.

The second lesson: In one respect there is a sharp contrast between the prophecies of the two dispensations. For example, the book of Daniel, which is the great prototype of this book. To Daniel, at the close of his apocalypse, greatly troubled because he did not understand his own visions, God said (and you will notice the contrast): "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased. . . . And I heard but I understood not; then said I: O my Lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said: Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall purify and make themselves white, and be refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but they that are wise shall understand. . . . But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot, at the end of the days."

Daniel is commanded to seal up his book; our verse

says: "Seal not up the words of this prophecy." Speaking concerning all the Old Testament prophecies, and also concerning the angels, Peter uses this language: "Concerning which salvation the prophets searched and sought diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what time, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did point to, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto you did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven. Which things angels desire to look into." It is the church, in her victories, that instructs the angels in the manifold wisdom of God. As Paul says to the Ephesians: "The manifold wisdom of God shall be made known to principalities and powers in heavenly places by the church." The old dispensation, clouded in type and shadow, left many things sealed up. The New Testament sweeps all the mists away.

Read now two other verses of the lesson: "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still; and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still; and he that is righteous let him do righteousness still; and he that is holy let him be made holy still. Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." Your author does not understand verse 11 to refer to the fixity of the final state after the judgment, to wit: that one then righteous will be righteous forever. That is true, but it is not taught here. This epilogue is not now considering the results of the judgment and the future state; they have been disposed of in another connection; this epilogue is not

a vision, it is not a part of the apocalypse. It simply tells of the application of all the lessons of the book to the present. A similar mode of expression appears in Ezekiel xii, 11, and Daniel xii, 10. The meaning is that, having now unveiled the future with it in reward and punishment, the choice is left to man to be righteous or unrighteous, holy or filthy; God will not coerce. Just so, some of the exiles would not hear Ezekiel, and some who heard him would not practise what he preached. He said: "I am to you merely as the sound of a pleasant instrument; you sit before me just as if you were the people of the Lord, but you go out after hearing me and continue to do your abominations."

It reminds me of the romantic legend of St. Anthony, who, having no people to preach to, went and preached to the fishes, and the record states that they were much edified. But the eels went on eeling, and the stock fish went on stealing, each one living in the same old way.

Notwithstanding Daniel's visions, the wicked, as God said to him, would continue to do wickedly. And so, notwithstanding this book of Revelation, those who love unholiness will be allowed to follow their bent, and those who prefer being filthy will go on being made filthy. He is permitted to follow his choice, but is warned that whatever each man chooses in time will be his destiny in eternity, as the last clause of the verse tells us: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works."

Read the 14th and 15th verses: "Blessed are they that wash their robes that they may have the right to come to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates of the city. Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the idolaters, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie." The reader will

note the difference in the text of verse 14 between the Common Version and the Revised, from which I quote. The King James Version reads this way: "Blessed are they that *do his commandments,* that they may have the right to the tree of life," and this version reads: "Blessed are they *that have washed their robes,* that they may have the right to the tree of life." That makes a marked difference in doctrine. The King James translators had not before them any one of the three oldest manuscripts of the New Testament: the Alexandrian manuscript, now in the British Museum, was presented to Charles I., son of James. The Sinaitic manuscript was discovered long after that translation by Tischendorf, and it is now in the Museum at St. Petersburg. The Vatican manuscript is in the Vatican Library at Rome. All these oldest and best manuscripts read: "Blessed are they that have washed their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life." I have fac-similes of all these oldest manuscripts in my library. You may accept it without question that in the best texts the reading is "Blessed are they who have washed their robes," etc. This harmonizes expressly with the parallel passage in the seventh chapter, 9th to 14th verses, where those arrayed in white robes are declared to be those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb, and harmonizes with the vital and fundamental truth that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The right to the tree of life comes by blood, not by works; by faith, not by doing. The thought of the passage follows strictly the preceding one. God will not coerce; the choice is with men; if they by faith will accept the Saviour and are cleansed in His blood, they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter into the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. But if they prefer to be dogs, sor-

cerers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters and liars, then their destiny is on the outside.

Read the 16th verse: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star." How often have I told you, since we commenced this book, that the God-appointed agency for lighting the world is the churches. The whole of this book, as a sacred deposit of revealed truth, is given to the churches. That is why the church is said to be the "pillar and ground of the truth."

Here, again, the connection is close: This book of Revelation is from the Lord. He sent His testimony by His angel. The message is fully authenticated; it is a message for the churches. They receive the deposit of truth for communication to all the world.

Read verse 17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and he that heareth, let him say, Come; and he that is athirst, let him come; and he that will, let him take of the water of life freely." The revelation of the way of life being completed, and the revelation of destiny at the judgment, and this revelation as a sacred deposit having been given to the churches, what shall they do with it? What are their duties in view of the fact that they are the custodians of the truth? Verse 17, which I have just read, answers that question.

But what does it mean? You are invited to come, and to come to what? The pre-millennialists insist that all the "comes" in this book refer to, or are spoken to, Jesus: "Come, Lord Jesus." I pointed out their error where the four Cherubim say, "Come," "Come," "Come," "Come." They are speaking not to the Lord Jesus, but are speaking to those horses that appear at their command to come, and I now say to you that the

Spirit does not say to Jesus, "Come," nor does the bride or the church, in this connection at least, say to Jesus, "Come"; and the one that hears does not say to Jesus, "Come." The rest of the verse will not make sense with such interpretation: "Let him that is athirst come, and such as will, let him partake of the water of life freely." To put that pre-millennial interpretation on the passage destroys the meaning of the greatest text in the Bible.

The revelation of the way of life and the judgment and eternal destiny being made clear and complete and authenticated, and that way of life shown to be by grace, through faith, in the cleansing of the blood of Christ; and the choice of the decision being left to man, and the complete revelation being deposited with the churches, we come to our verse: The Holy Spirit, Christ's vicar on earth, abiding in the church till the judgment day, in order to complete the cleansing by blood, says to all men, "Come." As if pointing to that picture of heaven, described in the last chapter, with the throne of God, with the water of life bubbling from under that throne and outflowing through the city, the Holy Spirit says to every sinner, to every lost man in the world: "Come to this water of life." What the Spirit says the church says: the Spirit and the church united give the invitation, and the Spirit gives the power to the invitation: "Come to the water of life." Not only is that an official invitation, but any man that hears the Spirit or the church give that invitation is authorized to repeat it. As you hear, you may turn at once to your nearest neighbour, your dearest friend, the members of your family, and say, "Come." Not only that, but whether you hear the Spirit or the church consciously, if you are athirst, if there be a craving in your soul, that very thirst in you is your authority

to come. As Jesus said: "Whosoever that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

What a glorious thing it is that there is so little red tape in the invitation of the gospel. You may be by yourself, you may have no preacher, you may not be in reach of any church; you may just have a longing in your soul for salvation: then come. Don't wait for anybody or anything. The thought even goes a step beyond. You may not even have that thirst, your only conviction may be that you cannot feel, yet if you are willing to come: "Whosoever will, let him come," without money and without price. How it falls into line with all Bible invitations; particularly with the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. That chapter was my mother's favourite. When I was a little bit of a fellow wearing dresses, I had to kneel down before her and repeat: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. . . . Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah iv, 1-3, 6, 7). Mark the glorious results: "For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their

hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." That is to say, in the joy of your heart you interpret differently all external nature, the sunlight is sweeter, the trees are more beautiful, the earth takes on a new dignity and nature, and you see everything through the rose colour of your faith.

I say, then, that while the choice is left to each man to be righteous or unrighteous, no choice is left to the church or to the Christian: you must invite. If he die, his blood must not be on you; you must say to him, "Come."

Read the 18th verse: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the tree of life and out of the Holy City which are written in this book." What a tremendous sentence! And in view of it, hear the ex-president of Harvard University say: "We need a new religion." He wants to add to what this book says. Hear the former professor of theology in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago say only a little part of the Christian religion will be final; you remember his book, "The Finality of the Christian Religion," which goes on whittling away on God's revelation until what is left, in his estimation, would rest without falling off on the point of a cambric needle. And they promoted him from a chair in the Divinity School to the University Chair of Comparative Religions. At which I wondered in this fashion: Since even he admits that the Christian religion is the best of all extant religions, but since only

an infinitesimal part of that will abide, why waste money to pay a man to institute comparisons between them?

I, for one, think that verses 18 and 19 are not exclusively limited to the book of Revelation. For, if I have correctly interpreted the foregoing passages, showing that this book is bound up with all the other prophecies into one unity, and as in this book Christ's prophetic office is closed henceforth, so then there will never be another revelation, nor need for another, and as this book is the climax revealing Paradise regained to meet the Paradise lost of Genesis, then the warning applies to all the inseparable library. Since this book makes known the way of life to the lost, since the only way to the tree of life and the holy New Jerusalem of God and the blessed society that is described in the preceding chapter, since through the blood of Jesus Christ is the only way to obtain the right to enter, how heinous must be the offence of taking away a part of this book, or adding a part!

There has always been in the sinner's heart a prurient desire to find some way to the secrets of the hereafter, and hence they have resorted to magic and sorcery, fortune-telling, soothsaying, necromancy and ten thousand other ways. Even in hell the rich man had that desire: "Father Abraham, send Lazarus back to yonder world to tell my brothers not to come here." Abraham said: "They have Moses and the prophets; they have the light." He said: "No, Father Abraham, if one would go unto them from the dead they will repent." Abraham said: "If they would not repent under Moses and the prophets, they would not repent under one that came from the dead." Whoever is not willing to be saved by this revelation, a stored up, a precious treasure of life, deposited with the churches, then how can he be saved?

That is why I told you, and probably shocked some of you by saying, that whoever is not saved through the shining of the candlesticks and stars, through the ministry of the light of the churches and the preachers, cannot be saved. Therefore, no man can be saved after Christ comes; all of the saving light is deposited with the churches. That is why I prefer to take my conception of the churches from Jesus Christ rather than from man's idea of what is the church. He established the church as an institution; he calls the concrete expression of the institution, "The churches": He says, "These are the candlesticks and the stars that are to illumine the world." I count being a church member a very great honour. Others prefer to run over the range as mavericks,—Texas cattlemen know what that means,—wild stock with no brand or mark on them. And there are quite a lot of preachers who prefer to be "free lances," independent of the churches. Paul says that Jesus set the apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers *in the church:* that is where He put them; they are not turned out loose in the world like wandering stars: they must have anchorage; they must hail from some port and must be going to some port.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. What part of this book the prologue, and what part the epilogue?
2. In what words is the whole book authenticated?
3. In what words is it connected in unity and authority with all preceding books of the sacred library?
4. What the meaning of "The Lord, the God of Spirits, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things" of this book?
5. What follows from this meaning?
6. How does Paul speak of the Old Testament book, first *collectively,* then *distributively?*
7. What the two great lessons from verses 8 and 9?

8. What the two lessons from verse 10?
9. What the meaning of verse 11, negatively and positively?
10. Wherein does the rendering of the Common Version of verse 14 differ from the Revision, and why?
11. Expound verse 17.
12. Why may you not restrict the words of verses 18 and 19 to this book alone?

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